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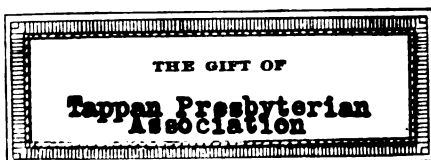
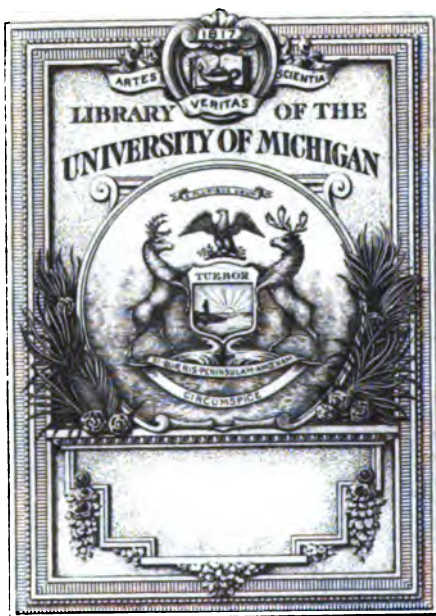
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NOTES

ON ALL THE

BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE,

FOR THE USE OF THE

PULPIT AND PRIVATE FAMILIES,

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BY JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL. D. F. R. S. &c.

*SI juxta apostolum Paulum Christus Dei virtus est,
Deique sapientia, et qui nescit scripturas nescit Dei
virtutem ejusque sapientiam, ignoratio scripturarum ig-
noratio Christi est.*

JEROME IN ESAIAM.

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NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF

K I N G S.

CHAPTER I.

1. **I**N the division of the twelve tribes on the accession of Rehoboam, Edom, which had been conquered by David, remained to Judah; while Moab, together with all the countries to the East of Jordan, were subject to the kings of Israel. On the death of Ahab the Moabites revolted, and became a powerful and independent nation.

2. He probably fell from the roof of his house by the parapet wall giving way. This deity is thought to have been one that was famous for relieving the country of Ekron from the swarms of flies, or musquito's, to which, being in a hot and moist situation, it was particularly subject. The same god might also be thought to have power over diseases; and on this account Ahaziah, who was addicted to heathenish superstitions, applied to him.

VOL. II.

A

4 Beda

4. Beds in the East are often raised several feet above the floor, in galleries at the corners of rooms, and the ascent to them is by steps.

8. This was the dress of the prophets in general. It was coarse and plain, but there was nothing of peculiar austerity in it. Such a dress John the Baptist wore.

10. This he said, no doubt, from a divine impulse. He seems to have called him *a man of God* by way of ridicule and insult, and to have commanded him in an insolent manner to attend the king.

11. This second messenger would, no doubt, think that the lightning which destroyed his predecessor had a natural cause, and therefore that he had no reason to be apprehensive of the like fate. He seems to have behaved in a more insolent manner than the former.

13. This third messenger was convinced that there must have been something supernatural in the destruction of the two companies that had preceded him, and therefore he behaved with becoming submission.

16. What had happened to the two first messengers had, no doubt, alarmed the king; so that tho' the prophet was now in his power, he did nothing against him.

17. *In the eighteenth year of Jehosaphat king of Judah, LXX, as in 2 Chron. xiii, 1.*

In order to reconcile the different accounts of the reign of Jehoram the son of Jehosaphat, it is supposed by some that he was made king jointly with his father seven years before his death.

Ch. II. 3. That Elijah was to be taken up into heaven, appears to have been known not only to Elisha, but to the sons of the prophets, and the people of those parts

parts in general. This information must have come from Elijah himself.

7. They looked in expectation of seeing the ascent of Elijah.

9. The double portion of the inheritance was the privilege of the first born son. A distinction similar to this was requested by Elisha, and not to be any thing more than Elijah himself had been.

10. It was not in the power of Elijah to grant this request; but he gave him a token by which he might know whether God would grant it or not, and he had his wish. But it does not appear in the history of Elisha, that he was in any respect superior to Elijah. Their miracles were equally great, but Elisha did not act so conspicuous a part in public life as Elijah had done.

11. This is a second, and the last, instance of a person translated into another life without dying, tho' it was perhaps the case of Moses. Where these persons, or our Saviour, who was raised from the dead, now are, or how they are employed, is altogether unknown. But as it cannot be supposed that they have any relation to any other world, or planet, they are, no doubt, in this.

12. What Elisha meant by saying the *chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof*, is uncertain. It was perhaps to express his high opinion of him, as the defence and guardian of the country; as chariots and horsemen were reputed to be.

14. This would be a proof to Elisha, that the spirit and power of Elijah remained with him.

15. Such too was the conclusion which the sons of

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the prophets drew from this miracle, of which they appear to have been spectators.

16. They thought he might have been conveyed to some other place, and not into another world, or state.

21. The salt would naturally make the water less wholesome, nor could the effect of a little salt, whatever had been its natural tendency, been permanent. The power of God was therefore most apparent in this miracle.

23. The word here translated *little children*, sometimes signifies young persons grown to men's estate. Isaac when he was twenty eight years old is so called, Gen. xxii, 5—12, and Joseph when he was thirty. Gen. xli, 12. What they did to insult the prophet was probably at the instigation of the priests of Baal. They had, no doubt, heard of the ascent of Elijah, but would not believe it. Since much hair was admired, baldness was reproachful.

24. This curse was, no doubt, from a divine impulse, previous to the just punishment of these profane young men.

Ch. III. 1. Ahaziah his brother began to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehosaphat, and reigned two years, 1 Kings, xxii, 51; and yet Jehoram began to reign in the eighteenth of Jehosaphat. Part of two years are, therefore, called two years. • •

3. He did not worship any strange god, but the true God in a forbidden manner.

4. In these times a great part of the wealth of kings arose from their private estates, which their sons and servants

servants managed for them. This is supposed to have been not an annual tribute, but a fine for some injury received from them.

8. The Edomites were tributary to the kings of Judah, and therefore he could command their assistance.

9. They had to go round the Southern part of the Dead sea.

11. That is, he was his servant, doing menial offices for him.

12. He was probably at no great distance, and they shewed their respect by going to him, rather than sending for him to attend them.

15. The music, probably accompanied with some sacred hymn, would tend to compose his spirits, especially after the just indignation he had expressed against the king of Israel, and in this state of mind he waited for the divine impulse. *He had probably had it at other times when he was thus composed.*

17. Rain in the East is often preceded by a brisk wind, as it is when thunder gusts arise in this country.

19. How clear is this prediction, and unlike the responses of the heathen oracles.

20. How this water was produced does not appear. But as there was neither wind nor rain, it must have been from some opening of the earth, or a miraculous production of the water, each of which was equally easy to the author of nature.

21. It might have this appearance from some optical deception.

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25. They destroyed all the country, demolishing all the fortifications, except those of the royal city, which was exceedingly strong. Is. xvi, 7—11.

27. The sacrificing of persons of distinction on extraordinary occasions was not uncommon with the heathens, who naturally thought that the more valuable the sacrifice was, the more acceptable it would be to their gods, especially those that they conceived to be of a savage and cruel nature. The Carthaginians at one time sacrificed three hundred young persons of the first families in their city. The Israelites were so much shocked at this sight, that they broke up the siege, and left the country; having, indeed, taken sufficient revenge for their rebellion. It does not, however, appear that the Moabites were ever reduced to their former dependence on the kings of Israel, but rose gradually to considerable power, as an independent nation.

Ch. IV. 1. It is evident that celibacy was not enjoined on those who are called the sons of the prophets, as some of these had wives; nor is it probable that any rigid observances were required of them. The creditor had a legal right, when the debt could not otherwise be paid, to seize the family of the debtor, and make him his slave, that is, till the year of release.

7. All the miracles wrought by Elisha were of the benevolent kind, resembling those of Jesus afterwards.

8. Shunem was in the road from Carmel, which was not far distant, to Bethel and Jericho.

13. It appears from this, and from other circumstances, that Elisha was well known, and respected at the court. His prediction of the late victory over the Moabites

Mosabites would produce that effect. This woman appears to have been wealthy, and to have wanted nothing more than she had.

16. The age of this woman is not mentioned. She probably was not old ; so that this miracle was not so great as that of the conception of Isaac.

22. She was not without hopes of the recovery of her son by means of the prophet ; having, no doubt, heard of the recovery of the widow's son by Elijah.

23. It is evident from this that it was customary to attend upon prophets, and probably the regular priests also, on the sabbaths and new moons, and this could only be for the purpose of religious exercises and instruction.

25. There was probably a school, or society, of prophets at Carmel, which was not far from Shunem.

26. She did not chuse to inform the servant of her business.

31. He presumed too much, and his presumption was properly checked.

34. In this he imitated Elijah ; and as the child had not been long dead, there might be some doubt of the recovery being properly miraculous. But both the mother and the historian evidently considered the child as having been actually dead.

38. It appears from this, that these sons of the prophets formed a society, and lived all together, at least those of them that were not married.

39. These are thought to have been the berries of the Coloquintida, which resemble grapes, but are violently purgative.

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41. What was put into the pot had no natural power to change the quality of the noxious berries.

42. It is probable that many of the prophets, and these schools of them, were supported in some measure by the alms of the people.

44. This miracle is similar to one of our Saviour's afterwards, and must have appeared very astonishing.

Ch. V. 5. From the credit that Naaman and the king of Syria gave to the account of this captive girl, it is evident that the neighbouring nations had a high idea of the power of the God of Israel, and a great respect for his prophets.

7. This conjecture was very natural.

12. He was offended both at the prophet's not attending upon him in person, and not curing him without putting him to any trouble.

15. He must have known that no real miracle like this had ever been wrought by any of the heathen gods.

17. This was probably for the purpose of building an altar to the God of Israel.

19. This was only a civil manner of dismissing him, without answering the questions he had put to him.

22. There was probably a school of prophets in mount Ephraim, as well as in other places.

24. The antient versions make this *a dark and private place*.

27. This was a proper punishment for his offence, and probably Naaman would hear of it.

Ch. VI. 7. This may seem to be a miracle wrought for a trifling purpose. But it had a benevolent object, and would serve to impress the minds of all the society

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with a sense of the presence and power of God, as well as a miracle of greater magnitude;

12. The fame of Elisha was, no doubt, very great through all Syria, in consequence of the cure of Naaman, as well as the report of his other miracles.

13. If he believed that the prophet could discover his most secret councils, his proposal to apprehend him must have been very absurd. But the Jews, who believed the miracles of Jesus, were not deterred by that from endeavouring to put him to death. Believing the power of the prophets not to be their own, or at their command; and seeing that in other respects they did not differ from other men, they might think it possible to secure their persons, and then treat them as they pleased. Dothan was in the tribe of Manasseh, not far from Shechem, or Samaria.

17. This would give him an idea that, tho' there was no visible appearance of assistance, they were perfectly safe through the protection of an invisible providence; not that the chariots and horses he saw were actually employed in their favour.

18. This was only a temporary blindness, or confusion of vision.

22. From this it appears not to have been the custom to kill even enemies in cold blood, but to make slaves of them.

23. This act of generosity had its natural and proper effect,

24. Benhadad seems to have been a common name, or title, for the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh was of those of Egypt.

25. It was, no doubt, vetches, or some coarse food, usually given to asses or fowls, that was so dear. Bochart has shewn that vetches were called dove's dung.

27. All his own stores were so exhausted that he could not give her any thing.

30. There are but few instances in history of persons being reduced by any famine to feed on human flesh, much less that of their own children; yet even this was expressly foretold by Moses to be the case with the Israelites. Another case of this kind occurred in the siege of Jerusalem by Titus.

31. We have had several instances of rage expressed against the prophets for denouncing divine judgments, when it was most evident that they had no power to inflict them. But this is the natural effect of the principle of association, in the minds of persons who are not given to reflection, and who are governed by passion more than by reason.

33. This is the language of rage and despair, like that of Job's wife, *Curse God and die*; as if he had said, since the judgment is from the Lord, it is in vain to expect deliverance from him.

Ch VII. 1. In reply to the desponding language of the king, the prophet assures him that relief was at hand.

2. He would be properly punished for his incredulity.

3. Lepers were not allowed to live in cities. But tho' these were without the gates, and the place was besieged, they appear not to have been molested. Their houses

houses were probably so near to the wall, that the enemy would not venture to come where they were.

6. This was a miracle of a peculiar kind, but it effectually answered the purpose. The remains of the Hittites were to the South of Palestine, and must have been in considerable numbers to have kings of their own. But Josephus has *kings of the isles*, so that he must have had a reading different from that of our present copies, or those from which the antient versions were made. Egypt must have been divided into several principalities at this time:

13. This small number of horses that were left, as well as the woman having killed her child, are proofs of the great distress to which the city had been reduced. The people must have had the most dreadful apprehensions of the cruelty of the enemy, not to have surrendered before they were brought to this extremity.

20. This extraordinary prediction was verified in a manner perfectly natural, and yet such as no person would have imagined before hand.

Ch. VIII. 1. This famine, some Jews say, was that which is mentioned by Joel; four years of it being caused by insects, which devoured all the fruits of the earth, and three more by want of rain.

4. As the miracles of Elisha were, no doubt, much talked of, it was natural for the king to get information concerning them, and no person was so well qualified to give it him as Gehazi; and having been a sufferer by them, he would not be disposed to magnify any thing
in

his favour. Tho' he was a leper, the king might converse with him at a proper distance.

5. This was a most reasonable confirmation of the fact, directed, no doubt, by a particular providence.

6. The estate had probably been confiscated, as deserted by its owner.

8. This circumstance is a proof of the great respect that the neighbouring nations entertained of the God of Israel; and after the cure of Naaman, who was of this country, and this very city, it is not to be wondered at.

9. This was a very valuable present, tho' in the East many carriages more than are necessary are usually employed in carrying presents; but it is not said whether the prophet accepted of it or not.

10. The disease was not naturally incurable, and he would not die of it, but from a different cause.

13. He thought it was impossible that he should ever be guilty of such shocking cruelties, or have it in his power to commit them; yet when he was king of Syria, which the prophet foretold, he actually did these very things; so much do men's dispositions and conduct depend on the circumstances in which they are, and the influences to which they are exposed.

15. He had, perhaps, laid this plan before his interview with the prophet, who would, therefore, appear to have seen into his very thoughts, and have foretold the issue of his schemes. But according to Dr. Geddes's translation, he did not smother the king. He might intend to relieve and recover him by pouring water upon him, which is done in fevers in some hot countries. See *Bruce's Travels*, Vol. iii, p. 33.

16. The words *Jehosaphat being then king of Judah*, are not in two MSS. of de Rossi, or in the Syriac, Arabic, and some copies of the LXX, and are unquestionably an interpolation. K. By omitting them a seeming difficulty is removed.

17. The seeming inconsistency in the accounts of the commencement of the reign of Jehoram king of Judah, some remove by supposing that he was made king in the life time of his father, and this at two periods, the first when he was appointed, and the second when he was actually crowned. But this was unusual, and is therefore improbable.

18. Viz. Athaliah. As the kings of Judah did not worship the calves at Dan or Bethel, this idolatry was probably the worship of Baal; tho' this had been discontinued by Ahab before his death.

20. The Edomites had been subject to Judah one hundred and fifty years from the time of David's conquest of the country.

21. This was probably some city near the land of Edom.

22. Notwithstanding this victory, the country was not recovered. Long after this it was conquered by Hyrcanus, and the people became incorporated with the Jews. This book, or the materials out of which this part of it was compiled, was written before the captivity. Libna was a considerable city in the tribe of Judah, and belonged to the priests. Josh. xxi, 18. Why this place revolted, or to whom, is not said.

24. Tho' he was buried in Jerusalem, it was not in the sepulchres of his fathers. 2 Ch. xxi, 20.

25 This

25. This was at the conclusion of the eleventh, and the beginning of the twelfth year, as appears from Ch. ix, 29.

26. In 2 Ch. xxii, 2, he is said to have been forty two years old when he began to reign ; but this is probably an error in the copy. For in the LXX it is twenty years. Athaliah was grand-daughter of Omri, for her father was Ahab. Ahaziah was the youngest son of Jehoram, his other children and wives having been carried away by the Philistines and Arabs, when they made an inroad into the country. See 2 Chron. xxi, 16, where he is called Jehoahaz.

Ch. IX. 1. This commission was given to Elijah, and it is now executed by Elishta. He, however, did not go himself, but sent another person, probably because he would not be known, and the business required secrecy.

2. He was probably commander in chief of the army.

3. He was anointed perhaps as being of a new family. Had he succeeded to the crown by the right of inheritance, it is thought that this ceremony would not have been necessary.

5. Jehu being the speaker on this occasion, makes it probable that he was the chief.

11. This young man, having the dress of a prophet, was treated with contempt by some of the company. Jehu thought to put them off by saying they knew what kind of a person he was by his dress, and might conclude that his errand was to give him some admonition on the subject of religion or morals ; it being customary with

with the prophets to exhort the people, and to make free even with kings themselves.

12. They suspecting, however, that this answer was evasive, he then told them the real purport of the message; and they being probably previously disposed in favour of the measure, proceeded without delay to the ceremony of the coronation, making a kind of throne, or elevated seat, by means of their garments, or putting them upon some bench on which he sat.

14. It had been fortified as a frontier town next to Syria.

20. He is called the son of Nimshi, tho' he was really his grandson.

22. Open fornication, and the arts of witchcraft, were practised by idolaters in these times.

25. They had attended as part of the guard of Ahab, when this sentence was pronounced by the prophet.

27. It appears from 2 Ch. xxii, 9, that he went to Samaria, and thence was brought to Jehu, who ordered him to be put to death, probably at Jezreel, as a descendant of Ahab.

31. Zimri was slain by Omri; the founder of Ahab's family. She might hope by reminding him of this to check his violence, but it had not that effect.

37. Thus, without any contrivance of Jehu, was the prediction concerning Jezebel exactly fulfilled.

Ch. X. 1. Some of these were probably grandsons, who are often called sons.

3. This must have been said by way of insult, knowing that it was not in their power to support any descendant of Ahab against him.

9 He

9. He seems to insinuate that he was not personally accountable for all these deaths.

10. He observes, however, that in whatever manner they were put to death, it was a fulfilment of the predictions of Elisha.

13. The brothers of Ahaziah were carried captive before this time, 2 Ch. xxi, 17. These, therefore, must have been brothers sons, as it is explained 2 Ch. xxii, 8.

14. What is meant by the *shearing house* is very uncertain.

15. He was a Kenite, and a person of distinguished piety and prudence, and probably the founder of the sect of *Rechabites*, of whom a particular account is given in Jeremiah, Ch. xxxv. 6.

21. He must have concealed his design with great care, to succeed in his scheme so completely.

28. This was a great work, and it was effectual; for we read no more of the public worship of Baal in the kingdom.

33. At this time, no doubt, Hazael acted as the prophet told him that he would act, committing the greatest cruelties.

34. In the LXX, and other antient versions, it is *king of Israel*, which, no doubt, was the original reading.

Ch. XI. 1. Athaliah being of the house of Ahab, and provoked at the conduct of Jehu, in destroying all his descendants, seems to have been determined to do the same by the house of David; having probably children by another husband than Ahaziah, whom she might intend to raise to the throne, 2 Ch. xxiv. 7.

2. Probably

2. Probably not by Athaliah but another wife. The place in which she concealed him was not a room in which persons slept, but one in which beds or carpets were kept; and there being probably a large store of these for the accommodation of the priests and Levites who attended at the temple, there might be room enough to conceal any person in it.

6. This was the East, and the principal gate of the temple, called also *the gate of the foundation* (2 Ch. xxiii, 5) being built upon the foundation, or those immensely large stones which supported this part of the temple from the bottom of the valley, which separated the city from the mount of Olives. The gate behind the guard was the South gate, which looked towards the palace, through which the kings came to the temple, and therefore a guard was placed near it.

7. The priests and Levites were divided by David into twenty four courses, to attend the service of the temple in their turns, each ministering a week from sabbath to sabbath.

9. Both those who had served the preceding week, and those who had come to attend the week following, were then present; the former it is thought not being dismissed till the business of the sabbath was over.

10. It is the custom in the East to count money into a bag, and then to seal it up, by which means it passes for its value a long time, without opening and counting again.

11. That is, from the South to the North, where he had been concealed.

12. The *testimony* was perhaps the book of the law, by which he swore to be governed. But some suppose that the word signifies some regal ornament.

The manner in which females in the East express their joy is not by clapping the hands together, as with us, but by applying one of their hands to their mouth. Pitts describing the reception of pilgrims from Mecca says, "the women got upon the tops of the houses to view the parade, where they kept striking their fingers on their lips softly as fast as they could, making a joyful noise all the time." Thus in Psalm xlvii, as well as in this place, the translation should be *clap the hand, not hands*.

14. He stood by the pillar at the East gate of the inner court, where it is supposed from Ezek. xlvi, 1—2, that the king entered on the sabbath day; whereas on other days he entered by the South gate.

16. There was another gate called the *horse gate*, in the wall of the city, Jer. xxxi, 39. This was for the king's horses to go out at from the stables at Millo, and is therefore called (2 Ch. xxxiii, 15) *the horse gate towards the king's house*.

17. He first made both the king and the people engage to adhere to the true religion, after which they took the usual oaths to discharge their respective duties as sovereign and subjects.

Ch. XII. 3. These were not removed till the reign of Hezekiah.

4. Besides the half shekel that was paid for the maintenance of the national worship, there were vows and free

free will offerings ; and now whatever accrued from them was applied to this use.

7 He put the work into other hands, these persons having been negligent.

9. In Ch. xxiv, 8, they had, at the king's command, made a chest, and placed it without the gate of the temple, where all the people had free access to it ; whereas the chest here mentioned was in a place where the people did not come ; so that the priests received the money from them, and probably had embezzled a part of it.

13. Those vessels might be wanting ; but the money that was collected at this time was appropriated to the repairs of the house.

17. Gath had been taken from the Philistines by David, 1 Ch. xviii, 1. 2 ; 2 Sam. viii, 2. This invasion of the country was after the king fell into idolatry, as appears from the book of Chronicles, where there is an account of another invasion by the Syrians. At this time Hazael came in person, and the king purchased a peace. But Hazael afterwards sent an army, which destroyed many of the people, and carried much spoil to Damascus, 2 Ch xxiv, 23—25.

21. Josephus supposes these persons to have been the friends of Jehoiada, who thus revenged themselves on the king for the murder of Zachariah the son of Jehoida, as it is said 2 Ch xxiv, 25.

Ch. XIII. 1. Joash began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, Ch. xii, 2, and he reigned only twenty eight years ; from which, if seven be deducted, there will remain only twenty one years, not twenty

B 2

eight

eight. But if the difficulty by not solved by reckoning part of a year for a whole year, it may by supposing an interregnum between the death of Jehu and the accession of Jehoahaz.

5. This saviour was probably the son of Jehoahaz, who repelled the invasion of the Syrians.

6. If the grove sacred to Baal remained in Samaria, the worship of Baal did not wholly cease in the reign of Jehu. It might be the worship of Astarte, which, however, was as great an enormity as the worship of Baal.

7. That is, the whole of his army, except this small number, was cut off.

10. Joash probably reigned together with his father three years, as this supposition will remove the difficulty occasioned by the two dates of his reign.

14. If this was in the tenth year of Joash, as the Jews say, Elifha prophesied sixty five years. The king used the words of Elifha on the ascent of Elijah, signifying that after that event, *he* had been the great advocate with God for the nation.

17. The Syrians had taken Gath, and Aphec might be not far from it.

19. By these signs, accompanied with the explanation of them, the king was assured that he would repel the invasion of the Syrians; but that he should defeat them only three times.

21. The sepulchre was probably dug in a rock, so that by removing the stone from the mouth they could put another body into it. By the revival of this dead man, God did honour to the deceased prophet; and
from

from this it would also be evident that the miracles wrought by him when he was alive were not effected by any power of which he was possessed, such as the heathens ascribed to charms, but by the power of God only.

Ch. XIV. 1. This was the thirty eighth year of his father Joash, three years before his death ; having, perhaps in consequence of the murder of Zachariah, been deemed unfit to reign.

2. Joash king of Israel reigned sixteen years, Ch. xiii, 10. so that Amaziah reigned fourteen years, while he lived, and fifteen after he was dead, which make twenty nine. See v. 17.

3. Both of them, in the latter part of their reigns, fell into idolatry:

7. This is the same with *Petra*, the metropolis of Arabia Petraea. The word *Yocktheel* signifies *obedience to God*; a name given him perhaps in consequence of his having obeyed God, in dismissing the Israelites whom he had hired to assist him in his wars, 2 Ch. xxv, 6.

8. He was offended on account of the injury the Israelites had done him when their assistance was refused, 2 Ch. xxv, 13.

9 He shewed his contempt of him by comparing him to a thistle, and himself to a cedar ; but the meaning of the thistle proposing a marriage with the cedar I do not see. What the king of Judah proposed was not an alliance, but hostility.

20. This was a punishment of Amaziah for wor-
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slipping the God of the Edomites, whom he had conquered.

21. He is generally called *Uzziah*. One of the names signifies the *help of God*, and the other the *strength of God*.

22 This was a city belonging to Edom, Deut. ii, 8. 2 Ch. viii, 17, conquered by David, but recovered in the reign of Joram.

23. This was the longest of any of the reigns of the kings of Israel.

25. Joash his father had recovered many cities from the Syrians, and he received others, from the Northern boundary of the country to the Southern. We have no other account of this prediction of Jonah than this incidental mention of it. He was the first of the prophets after Samuel whose writings are come down to us; But what we have of him relates wholly to Nineveh. Gathhepher was near Taberias, on the sea of Galilee.

26. There was none to succour or assist him; so the LXX, and other versions render the phrase.

28. The LXX and the Chaldee have *Judah in Israel*, and the Syriac and Arabic in *Israel*, which was probably the true reading.

Ch. XV. 1. Amaziah, the father of Azariah, lived only fifteen years after the beginning of the reign of Jeroboam; so that Azariah began to reign not in the twenty seventh, but in the beginning of the seventeenth year of Jeroboam. Perhaps Jeroboam reigned with his father eleven years, or there might be an interregnum between the death of Amaziah and the inauguration of Azariah. Josephus has the fourteenth year instead

instead of the twenty seventh. There is probably some error in the present text :

2. This is the longest reign of any of the kings of Judah, and this king distinguished himself, as we shall find, very much, 2 Ch. xxvi, 5, &c.

5. The cause of this is said, 2 Ch. xxvi, 16, to have been his presuming to officiate in the priests office.

7. In 2 Ch. xxvi, 23, it is said that he was buried in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings, which might be nothing more than another method of designating the same place.

8. Perhaps this was the thirty eighth year from the time that Azariah began to reign with his father.

12. This was the fourth in descent from Jehu. They were Jehoahaz, Joash, and Jeroboam.

15. No particulars are known of the reign of Zechariah, or that of Shallum, and but little of that of Menahem, the chronicles of the kings of Israel being lost.

19. Pul is the first king of Assyria that is mentioned in the scriptures ; and it is evident from the preceding history, that there could not have been any empire of Assyria that extended westward before this time ; Syria having some time before been not only independent, but very powerful.

22. There must have been an interregnum between the reign of Menahem and that of his son. For the latter did not begin to reign till the ninth year of Azariah, and Menahem died the year before.

23. Dr. Geddes says perhaps the fortieth year.

29. He was the son of Pul. He carried away more

than half of the people of Israel. Some think that Pul took some captives. But this does not appear from 2 Ch. v, 26, which is the only authority for the supposition.

30. It is said v. 33. that Jotham reigned only sixteen years; but he might have reigned four years together with his father. Dr. Geddes supposes the true reading to have been the tenth, instead of the twentieth, of Jotham.

32. The name *Uzziah* is oftener used than that of *Azariah*; but this is the only time in which he is so called in this book. Perhaps the person who copied it changed the name without design.

35. This was between the temple and the king's house. Ch. xviii, 20. It was first built by Solomon, but perhaps rebuilt and repaired by Jotham.

37. It is probable that the war, tho' planned, was not actually made, before the reign of Ahaz.

Ch. XVI. 2. *Twenty five years*, 2 Chron. xxviii, 1, LXX.

3. He was properly an idolater, worshipping the gods of the seven devoted nations, which is the more extraordinary as the kings of Israel had abandoned that worship from the time of Ahab. Perhaps Ahaz might ascribe the declining state of the kingdom of Israel to the neglect of that worship. His making his son to pass through the fire, does not imply that he burned him alive, but merely his drawing him over a flame, or fire, by way of purification, or consecration to a heathen deity. Burning men alive, and especially the sons of princes, was never done but on extraordinary occasions
in

in any country, such as does not appear to have occurred in the reign of Ahaz. For when he was alarmed by the invasion of the Syrians and Israelites, he had assurance of deliverance by Isaiah.

5. They ravaged the country, 2 Ch. xxviii, 5, but could not take Jerusalem, as Ahaz had been assured by Isaiah.

6. This city, which was on the Red sea, had been recovered to the dominion of Judah by Uzziah, Ch. xiv 22. He took it from the Syrians, who now retook it.

9. In 2 Chron. xxviii, 20, it is said that Tiglathpileser *did not help him*. But as he turned his arms against Rezin, one of his enemies, and conquered him, Ahaz must have derived some advantage from it.

Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Isaiah, who said that before a child who would soon be born could distinguish good from evil, both Syria and Israel would be deprived of their kings. Kir, Josephus says, was in upper Media.

Tho' the form of this altar was different from that of Solomon, it is not certain that the erection of it was contrary to the law; nor is it all probable that the sacrifices upon it were to any other God than Jehovah the God of Israel. Indeed we never read of any morning and evening sacrifices to any heathen god, except at Hierapolis, and they were probably very different from those of the Israelites. His sacrificing to these gods was probably in some other place.

15. He proposed to make some particular use of the former altar; or perhaps his meaning was that it should remain there till he had considered what to do with it.

18. This was perhaps a covered seat, or throne, for the king and his family when they attended in the temple. He also cut off the communication between the king's house and the temple. This, however, was probably after the erection of the new altar in the temple, and when he proceeded to greater degrees of idolatry mentioned in the book of Chronicles. For while he made use of any altar in the temple, he would want a communication between his house and it.

Ch. XVII. 1. In Ch. xv, 30, it is said that he began to reign in the twentieth year of Jotham, which was the fourth of Ahaz. Mr. Whiston thought there was an interregnum of twelve years from the death of Jeroboam II, and this is not improbable from what is said by Hosea, who lived in this time. Ch. x, 30. *Now shall they say we have no king, because we feared not the Lord. What then should a king do unto us?* Dr. Geddes reads the second year instead of the twelfth. It is thought that there was an anarchy of nine years after the death of Pekah.

2. Perhaps not like Ahab, who worshipped Baal, but adhered to the worship of the golden calf at Bethel. Dan was at that time in the possession of the Assyrians.

4. It is pretty evident from a Dissertation of Sir William Jones on the subject, that the *Afghans*, a warlike nation between Persia and Indostan, are descended from the Israelites. This agrees with their own traditions, and the best Persian historians, tho' since their conversion to Mahometanism they endeavour to conceal their origin. Their language has a manifest resemblance to the Chaldean, and a considerable district under

under their dominion is called *Hazaret*, which very much resembles *Arsareth*, the country to which it is said that the ten tribes carried captive by the Assyrians went in the Apocryphal book of *Ezdras*, Ch. xiii, 45, after they had been settled in Assyria.

In the *Letters Edifiantes et curieuses*, written by the Jesuit missionaries, it is said, Vol. 4. p. 25, that formerly a great part of the inhabitants of the province of Sirvan, on the borders of the Caspian sea (once part of Assyrian empire) were carried to the extremity of Persia, between Balk, Cabou, and Candahar, where they retain their antient name, and are called *Agvans*.

At what time this migration took place is uncertain. The writer of a note in this passage of the *Lettres Edifiantes*, says they were removed by Tamerlane. But it is evident from his history that they were where they now are before his time. The army of Mahmud Gafni, in A. D. 1000, is said to have been chiefly composed of them.

5. Before this he conquered Moab, and destroyed their principal cities, Ar and Kirhares, according to the prediction of *Isaiah*, Ch. 16.

6. These places are in Media or Assyria, where others of their countrymen had been carried by *Tiglath-pileser*.

7. From this verse to the seventeenth is an account of the reasons of the divine displeasure against the ten tribes, in consequence of which they suffered as they had done, and were finally carried captive by the Assyrians.

8. They not only worshipped the golden calves set up

up by Jeroboam, but the gods of the devoted nations ; and tho' this worship was not publicly practised, and with the authority of the kings, after the reign of Ahab, it was, no doubt, done by many persons in private, and probably without any restraint from the princes.

9. That is from cottages built on eminences, from which shepherds could have an eye on their sheep feeding below them, or places in the country as well as in the city.

10. The word here rendered *groves* must signify the idols that were worshipped in the groves. The word that is commonly rendered *grove* very much resembles *Ashteroth*, which was *Astarte*, a female deity worshipped in many parts of the East.

19. Several of the kings of Judah were as much addicted to idolatry as those of Israel ; but others kept themselves free from every thing of the kind, and on this account that kingdom continued about a century longer ; and great numbers of this tribe returned from the captivity, tho' afterwards their sufferings exceeded those of the ten tribes ; and the whole of the Israelitish nation has now been many centuries dispersed through all the nations of the world.

23. All these calamities, and especially their ejection out of their country, and their dispersion, were most distinctly foretold by Moses.

24. This was done by Efarhaddon, Ezr. iv, 2, Babylon was then subject to the Assyrians, but after this the Chaldeans revolted, and formed an independent kingdom, which soon swallowed up that of Assyria. Cuthah was probably in the country in which Cush originally

ginally settled, in the land of Shinar, the people being called Cuthæi, this change of the letter *s* into *t* being very common. The Avites were an antient people driven by the Caphthorim from Hazerim, and who settled beyond the Euphrates. Deut. ii, 23. Hamath was a city of Syria next to the land of Canaan. There was a city called Siphora near the Euphrates, and not far from the sea.

25. Much of the country having been deserted, the wild beasts would naturally increase in it; and this was considered as a divine judgment for their idolatry, all events being then ascribed to supernatural influence.

26. It was a maxim with all the heathens that each country had its peculiar gods, or guardians, and that all the inhabitants ought to conform to the established mode of worshipping them. On the present occasion this opinion had a good effect, as it was the means of restoring the worship of the true God; and this gradually excluded that of any other; so that soon after the Babylonish captivity all the Samaritans were as free from idolatry as the Jews themselves. To this Josiah, no doubt, contributed. For we read 2 Ch. xxxiv, 33, *that he took away all the abominations out of all the country which pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve the Lord their God; and all his days they departed not from following the Lord God of their fathers.*

30. The term *Succoth Benoth* signifies *the tabernacle of daughters*, and according to Herodotus all the Babylonian women prostituted themselves in the temples of their deities. From the word *Benoth* Mr. Selden conjectures

jectures that the word *Venus* was derived; and in all her temples in the West prostitution was openly practised.

This was the same with the Phœnician Venus worshipped at Byblos, and on mount Lebanon, the rites of which worship historians describe as abominably impure. This Venus was not the same with the Venus styled *Urania*, or *celestial*, which was the same with Juno. *Jurieu sur les dogmes*, &c. p. 693.

The meaning of the word *Nergal* is very uncertain. Some think that his worship was that of fire, the people addicted to it being the same that were afterwards called Persians. Who was *Ashima*, or *Nibhaz*, or *Tartach*, is not known; and the conjectures on the subject are not worth reciting.

31. Adrameleck, and Anamelick, are, no doubt, the same with Molock, or the sun, to whom children were sacrificed.

34. *They fear the Lord, but not doing after the statutes, nor after the ordinances, nor after the law and commandment, &c.* MSS. LXX.

41. This must have been written before the return from the Babylonish captivity. For after that time we read of no idolatry among the Samaritans.

Ch. XVIII. 1. As Ahaz lived only thirty six years, Ch. xvi, 2. he must, according to this account, have had Hezekiah when he was only eleven years old, which is incredible. Dr. Geddes supposes the true reading of Ch. xvi, 2, to have been twenty five, instead of twenty, so that Ahaz will have been sixteen when he had this son.

Mistakes

Mistakes in copying numbers are common in all antient books.

4. In putting an end to the worship of God in high places, he carried his reformation farther than any of the former kings, even the most pious of them. When the superstitious practice of burning incense to the brazen serpent began, how far it extended, or what was meant by it, is quite uncertain. By calling it *Nehushtan*, or a *piece of brass*, Hezekiah probably intended to signify, that it was of no more value than any other piece of the same metal.

7. Abaz had submitted to the king of Assyria.

8. This phrase *from the tower of the watch men to the fenced city*, has occurred before, Ch. xvii, 19. If it have the same signification in both places, the meaning in this will be that he took possession both of the open country and of the cities. This agrees with the prophecy of Isaiah, Ch. xiv 8, where he bids the Philistines not to rejoice because the rod that smote them was broken, viz, Uzziah (who as we read, Ch. xxvi, 6, had greatly distressed them) for that out of his root would come another who would distress them much more, meaning Hezekiah.

11. This account of the conquest of Samaria was mentioned before Ch. xvii. 6.

13. Senacherib was the son of Shalmanassar, Tobit i, 15. From this place to the end of the reign of Hezekiah the history is almost word for word the same with Is. xxxvi.--xxxix; and from this book of Isaiah, who lived at the time, it was, no doubt, copied. Senacherib
seems

seems to have got possession of almost all the country except Jerusalem.

14. This was a city of Judah (Josh. xv. 39) which Senacherib was then besieging. Three hundred talents of silver and thirty of gold was a heavy fine, but could not have been a yearly tribute.

16. Ahab had probably taken away this gold, and Hezekiah had replaced it, but was now obliged to take it off again.

17. It is thought that after receiving this fine Senacherib invaded Egypt, to which Isaiah may allude, Ch. x, 26—28, tho' he proceeded no farther than Pelusium, and that then breaking his faith with Hezekiah, he had sent his army to attack Jerusalem. They took their post to the West of the city.

21. At this time the two great rival powers were Assyria on the one hand and Egypt on other.

22. This shewed his ignorance of the religion of the country. Or, perhaps, considering the ancient gods of the country as its proper defenders, he concluded that Hezekiah, by abolishing their worship, had deprived himself of their assistance.

23. This was to shew his contempt of the forces of Hezekiah. But the Israelites never made much, if any, use of horses in war.

25. For this he could not have had any pretence except that from having conquered the ten tribes, he concluded that God would deliver up to him the kingdom of Judah also.

27. This must have been intended to intimidate the people, and induce them to surrender the city.

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32. He proposed to remove them to another country, which was at that time much done, in order to prevent rebellions from the attachment of people to their native country. From a similar policy the Romans afterwards never employed the troops raised in any country to serve in the same, but always in a distant one.

34. These were all cities or countries that had been conquered by the Assyrians.

Ch. XIX. 3. That is, deliverance is much wanted, the danger being imminent, but no power left.

7. This was probably a pestilential wind, which kills in an instant, and is often confined to a small compass. Some suppose the meaning to be that Senacherib would change his mind, and return to his own country, in consequence of hearing of the approach of the Egyptians.

8. He left Rabfaris to carry on the siege. He himself, unable to take Lachish, had sat down before Libna.

9. Cush is the name of two countries, one in Arabia, and the other in Ethiopia, originally, no doubt, the same; but separated by the Red Sea. Sometimes the Egyptians and Ethiopians had but one king, who must then have been very powerful. Who this Tirhakah was is uncertain.

12. There was a Gozan, and also a Haran, in Media. Ptolemy mentions Reseph in Assyria, where Jerom places Thelassar. Several cities were called Adana.

13. These places were mentioned in the speech of Rabshakeh.

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14. He probably had the letter carried by the high-priest into the temple, while he stood and prayed without.

15. How much higher an idea had the Israelites of their God, than the heathen nations had of theirs. The God to whom Hezekiah prayed was considered by him as having made the heavens and the earth, and as the sole governor of the world; whereas the gods that were worshipped by other nations were only thought to superintend particular districts in nature, without having created any thing.

21. It was usual in antient languages to consider cities and countries as females.

26. It was before appointed of God that he should succeed as far as he had done.

28. This seems to have been the purport of what Hezekiah was to reply to Senacherib. Here is probably an allusion to the method of guiding a dromedary by a hook put through the nose, to which is fastened a cord held by the rider.

29. This is addressed to Hezekiah himself. What is here called a *sign* was not a token of his approaching deliverance, but a proof of God's especial favour, that tho' the country was much wasted, the natural produce of the soil would be sufficient for the food of that year; that in the next, which was probably the sabbatical year, on which they could not lawfully sow, they would still find enough from the seed that would be spontaneously scattered the preceding year; and in the third year they might cultivate the ground as usual. From this we learn that the precept concerning the sabbatical

atical year, Lev. xxv, was actually observed, tho' no particular notice is taken of it in the history.

30. Like their corn, the people would increase and prosper.

31. The people who were then besieged, many of whom had taken refuge in Jerusalem from distant parts of the country, would return to their possessions.

35. It is not certain where the main body of Senacherib's army then was, whether at Libna or Jerusalem. Wherever it was, it was probably destroyed by a pestilential wind. No natural disease could kill so suddenly, or leave so few.

Herodotus has preserved some account of this great destruction. According to him Senacherib king of the Assyrians and the Arabians, were invading Egypt, when Sethon, both a priest and king of that country had a vision, in which he was assured of help from God; that then, accompanied with a few persons, but without any soldiers, he approached the camp of the enemy, and found that a number of rats had come in the night and destroyed their bow strings, and the leather of their shields, so that they could make no defence, and were slain in great numbers. Lib. ii, p. 141.

37. Who this Nisroch was is uncertain, the name never occurring in any other place. How two of Senacherib's sons should conspire together and kill him, and another succeed him, does not appear. But there are events similar to this in other histories. The name of Esarhaddon is variously written. In Isaiah, Ch. xx, he is called Sargon; in Tobit Sarchedon, and in the LXX Aserden.

Ch. XX. 1. This sickness of Hezekiah must have preceded the invasion by Senacherib, since he was to live fifteen years after it, and his whole reign was only twenty one years. It must therefore, have fallen on the fourteenth year of his reign, the year in which the king of Assyria began to invade his kingdom.

7. This might be an useful medicinal application, so that there might be nothing properly miraculous in the cure. But that he should both recover, and live fifteen years after, could not have been known to any but to the giver, and the sovereign disposer, of life.

8. His requiring a miraculous assurance, or pledge, of his recovery, seems to argue some distrust of the event. But there had been several examples of the same kind, especially that of Gideon, when God was pleased to condescend to the weakness of pious men, as he did in this case.

11. It was not necessary for the purpose of this miracle that any change should take place in the course of the sun. It was sufficient if the *shadow* only went back, and that for a short time, as it would be equally satisfactory to Hezekiah. And tho' it is said, Is. xxxviii, 8, that *the sun returned ten degrees*, it may be understood of the shadow made by the sun.

12. In Isaiah xxxix, 1, he is called Mesodach Baladan. Babylon is supposed to have been at this time dependant upon the kings of Assyria. But as he is called the *king of Babylon*, and sends ambassadors, he seems to have been a sovereign prince.

13. *And Hezekiah was glad.* MSS.

. 12 This

18. This cannot be supposed to have been a just punishment of the mere vanity and ostentation of Hezekiah, tho' this occasion was chosen to inform him of what would become of his treasures in future time. We have been repeatedly told that the sufferings and captivity of the tribe of Judah, as well as of the other ten tribes, was for their idolatry, and their vices in general. The prediction that some of the descendants of the royal family would be eunuchs in the court of Babylon, is thought to have been in part verified in Daniel and his companions ; tho' the word may signify nothing more than menial offices, such as were usually performed by eunuchs.

19. This was the language of true piety, accepting the good with thankfulness, and submitting to the evil with resignation, as equally coming from the hand of God.

Ch. XXI. 2. This sudden change from the piety of Hezekiah to more open idolatry than had been practised by any of the preceding kings, is not a little extraordinary. But the difficulty is lessened by considering the age at which Manasseh began to reign ; so that the turn which he took would not depend upon his father so much as on the disposition of those who had the care of his education.

4. This was an enormity that had never been committed before. For tho' Ahaz built a new altar in the temple, it does not appear to have been in honour of any other than the true God.

7. This is supposed by Mr. Selden to have been a wooden image of Astarte,

9. We never read of horses consecrated to the sun before this time ; so that Manasseh not only adopted the worship of the old inhabitants of the land of Canaan, but added other superstitions.

10. Hosea, Joel, Nahum and Habakkuk, and as some think Obadiah, prophesied in the reign of Manasseh, and Isaiah is said to have been put to death, by being sawn asunder by his orders.

13. He would inflict upon the kingdom of Judah the same judgments that had befallen the ten tribes, and would so empty the country of its inhabitants, that none should be left. This was not fully accomplished till the reign of the emperor Adrian.

16. By *innocent blood* was probably meant the sacrifices of children, and other human victims, to the heathen deities.

18. In the book of Chronicles we have an account of the captivity and repentance of Manasseh. Why he was not buried in the sepulchre of the kings of Judah does not appear.

20. There is something very remarkable in the sudden change of the religion of those kings. Manasseh was pious before his death, and as far as he could, he undid all that he had before done, in favour of idolatry, and yet his son followed the example of the former, not of the latter, part of his reign.

Ch. XXII. 2. In Josiah we have an instance of another sudden change, and a greater than had ever taken place before. For in his zeal for the true religion, he exceeded even Hezekiah.

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4. He had ordered the temple to be repaired, and money to be collected for that purpose.

8. This was probably the original copy of the book of the law, which had been laid up in the holy of holies.

11. It by no means follows from this account that this was the first time that Josiah had heard of the book of the law. Many persons at this day are affected in a similar manner on reading the scriptures, tho' they were well acquainted with them. This was the original copy, and thereby drew the attention of the king in a more particular manner than it had done before. But he could never have set about the reformation as he had done, if the religion contained in that book had not been well known to him. More absurd still is it to suppose that this was the origin of the Hebrew religion, and that the book of the law ascribed to Moses was composed by the priests at that time. How came the tabernacle and the temple to have been erected, and an order of priests and a ritual observance to have been established, and the festivals of the *passover*, *pentecost*, and of *tabernacles*, all in commemoration of remarkable events connected with their religion, to have been observed from very early times, if the books which contained directions for these things had not been extant. The Psalms of David are unquestionably authentic, and in them there are perpetual references to the *written law*, on which he says he *meditated day and night*; and in them there are frequent allusions to every thing of much importance in the history contained in the Pentateuch.

14. The mode of inquiring of the oracle by means of the high priest clothed with the ephod, which was common in the time of David, must have been disused afterwards. To Hezekiah, as well as to Josiah, and other pious kings, answers had been given by the intervention of prophets only. This Huldah might have been applied to as living in Jerusalem, from which Jeremiah, or Zephaniah, who prophesied in this reign might be absent; or at this time they might not have acquired the established reputation of Huldah. It pleased God to distinguish several women with the spirit of prophecy, as well as other great attainments, to shew that, in his sight, and especially in things of a spiritual nature, there is no essential pre-eminence in the male sex, tho' in some things the female be subject to the male.

In what part of the city Huldah is here said to have lived is uncertain. Some of the antient versions make it a school of the prophets, and no doubt a woman advanced in years might have lived in such a place without reproach. But others think that it was within the second wall of the city, there being three in all.

20. How full and distinct is this answer by the prophets, and how unlike, as it cannot be too much noticed, to the obscure and ambiguous answers of the heathen oracles. Josiah's *dying in peace* is sufficiently explained by its being said that *he should not see the evil that God would bring upon his country*. He died in battle, but after a sufficiently long reign, and before the Babylonish captivity.

Ch. XXIII.

Ch. XXIII. 1. ~~1. The Priests and the Levites, and all the people, &c.~~ MSS.

Probably the king himself set the example, by reading to one company, while other persons, and especially the priests, did the same to others.

3. He probably took his station in a place provided for the kings when they attended the service of the temple.

4. This was to shew his detestation of the worship that had been carried on there, tho' it was not so heinous as that of Baal. From Bethel having been within the kingdom of the ten tribes, and being now in the power of Josiah, it has been inferred that after the captivity of the ten tribes a great part of the country was taken possession of by the kings of Judah.

5. Here Baal is distinguished from the sun, tho' they were in reality no other than the same deities. Several of the Egyptian gods have been shewn to have been originally the same sun, in different situations with respect to the earth, and as possessed of different attributes, and worshiped with different rites. So also other heathen deities, as Chemosh, Baal, Adonis, Molock, &c. were originally the same, tho' the names and modes of worship became different in different countries.

6. Here it is evident that the word which is generally translated *grove* must signify an image; and it was probably that of Astarte, which is a word very nearly resembling it. The remains of this image were thrown among the common graves as a thing most impure and detestable.

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7. That sodomy, as well as fornication, was practised in the precincts of several of the heathen temples, is most certain; and this is the second time that it has been alluded to in the sacred history. These hangings made by women were to make different apartments for such purposes.

8. Geba was in the Northern part of the tribe of Benjamin, 1 Kings, xv, 22. There were probably towers near the gates of cities for their better defence, and for the purpose of descrying the approach of an enemy. These, in idolatrous times would be used for idolatrous purposes, as were the roofs of houses and other elevated situations.

9. Tho' he would not permit those priests who had joined in idolatrous worship to officiate in that of the temple, he allowed them their share of the sacrifices according to the laws of Moses.

10. This was in the valley through which ran the brook Cedron, which having been used for the most horrid of all idolatrous purposes, he made the receptacle of all the filth of the city, the more effectually to pollute it.

11. Horses, on account of their swiftness, were by the heathens consecrated to the sun, and in some places were worshiped; but it is uncertain what use was made of these. Chariots were used by the Egyptians for processions, in which the images of their gods were carried from their temples, and back to them again, as is now done in Hindostan. This had been probably done in Jerusalem, and horses used on the occasion.

13. *The mount of Olives.* MS.

No

No doubt the worship that had been performed in these temples or places had been suppressed by preceding pious kings ; but the buildings had been suffered to remain. These were now demolished, and the places defiled, so as to be rendered unfit, in the opinion of the heathens themselves, to be applied to their former uses.

15. It is evident from this, that Bethel, tho' not Dan, was within the jurisdiction of Josiah.

16. This verse is remarkably defective, and should be supplied from the LXX thus—*Which the man of God proclaimed, when Jeroboam stood by the altar at the feast. And king Josiah turning about, cast his eyes on the sepulchre of the man of God, who proclaimed these words.* See 1 Kings, xii, 32, and xiii, 3. H.

17. There was probably some inscription to distinguish some sepulchres from others, especially those of persons who were on any account eminent.

22. The passover, had, no doubt, been observed by all the pious kings of Judah ; but it must in some measure have been neglected to give occasion to this remark. The concourse of people to Jerusalem must at this time have been unusually great, and more zeal was probably shewn than on the similar occasion in the reign of Hezekiah.

29. At this time Babylon was not only independent of Nineveh, but this city having been taken by the kings of Babylon and Media, it had become part of the Chaldean empire. But tho' the seat of the empire was removed to Babylon, it is often denominated the Assyrian empire, especially when opposed to Egypt. These

two

two were then great rival powers, and the intermediate countries were often brought into difficulty by taking part with one against the other. How Josiah came to take the part of the Chaldeans in opposition to the kings of Egypt is not said. This war of Pharaoh Necho the king of Egypt, and the battle between him and the Assyrians at Magdolum are mentioned by Herodotus.

He was marching to besiege Carchemish on the Euphrates ; but not being able to cross the desert with his army, he was obliged to pass through Palestine and Syria, and at Megiddo, in the tribe of Manasseh, this battle was fought.

30. He was called Shallum, Jer. xxi, 11, and was younger than his brother Jehoiakim. For he was only twenty three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned only three months. After this his brother Jehoiakim was made king when he was twenty five years of age. It is still no uncommon thing in Eastern countries to chuse any of the royal family who is thought the best qualified to reign, tho' it is frequently the occasion of civil wars.

34. This was according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Ch. xxii, 10, &c. *Weep not for the dead (that is Josiah) neither bemoan him, but weep sorely for him that is gone away, for he shall return no more, nor see his native country, but shall die in the place whether they have led him captive.*

Ch. XXIV. 1. He began to reign in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Jer xxv, 1, when, having defeated Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish, he made the Jews tributary

to

to him as they had been to Pharaoh. In the fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar Jehoiakim rebelled, and was carried to Babylon, 2 Ch. xxvi, 6; but promising fidelity, he was restored, and served three years longer. In his ninth year he rebelled again, probably at the instigation of the king of Egypt, who was not able to help him.

2. All these nations had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, and been ordered to attack Jehoiakim. After which he came himself, reduced Jerusalem, and carried away part of the vessels of the temple. Consequently this was the third year of Jehoiakim mentioned by Daniel, Ch. i, 22, after he was restored to his kingdom, when Daniel and his companions were carried captive to Babylon. This had been foretold by Isaiah, 2 Kings, xx, 17, 8; by Huldah, Ch. xxii, 16; and by Jeremiah, Ch. xiv & xv.

4. This *innocent blood*; so often mentioned, was probably the blood of innocent children, and other human victims sacrificed to the heathen gods.

6. Being taken by the Chaldeans he died out of the gates of Jerusalem, where he had what is called Jer. xxii, 18 19, the *burial of an ass*, that is, without a decent funeral; so that the phrase *sleeping with his fathers*; can only mean that he died as they did. Jehoiakim is called Jeconiah, 1 Ch. iii, 16, Jer. xxii, 24.

8. That is, after the death of his father, who it is supposed had associated him with himself in the kingdom when he was eight years old, 2 Ch. xxxvi, 9; so that he reigned ten years with his father, and three after his death. But there may be an error in one of the numbers.

10. He had engaged the assistance of the kings of Egypt.

12. This was the eighth of Nebuchadnezzar.

13 — *Cut off*, i. e. from their bases. H.

14. At this time Ezekiel was carried captive. *Kish*, the great grandfather of Mordecai, of the tribe of Benjamin, was also carried captive at this time. Est. Ch. ii, 5, 6.

16. These are the particulars of the *ten thousand* mentioned v. 14. — There was another captivity before this in the last year of Nabopolassar, Dan. i, 1, 2, 3; but it is thought that only a few select persons were then carried away, to wait on the king of Babylon. They are not mentioned by Jeremiah, or in this book. From this captivity [of Jehoiakim the seventy] years of Jeremiah are generally dated.

20. The country being ripe for the divine judgments, this rebellion of the king was the means of bringing them on.

Ch. XXV. 6. Riblah is supposed to have been the same city that was afterwards called Antioch. There sentence was passed upon him as a rebel.

7. Thus were fulfilled two prophecies which seemed to contradict one another, that of Jeremiah, who said that he would be carried to Babylon, Ch. xxxii, 5—xxxiv, 3, and that of Ezekiel, Ch. xii, 13. that he would not see Babylon. He was carried thither blind. The prophecy of Ezekiel who lived in Chaldea, was probably unknown to Zedekiah at the time.

8. In Jer. lxii, 12, it is the *tenth day*.

This was in the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar.

9 The

9. The temple of Solomon had stood, according to the Jews, four hundred and thirty years; and both at this time and afterwards, by Titus, Josephus observes that it was burned in the same month, and the same day of the month. As no mention is here made of the ark, it was probably burned together with the temple, tho' the gold with which it was covered would, no doubt, be taken off.

11. There were in all eight hundred and thirty two persons. Jer. lxii, 29.

17. These two pillars are more particularly described 1 Kings, vii, 5, and in Jer. lii, 21. They must have been thought very extraordinary to deserve so particular a description.

22. Ahikam was the great friend of Jeremiah; and by his advice, he, or his sons, might fly to the king of Babylon.

25. He had then been governor two months. The ten men were probably chiefs who had others under them. Ishmael, being one of the royal family, might hope to make himself king.

26. This was contrary to the advice of Jeremiah, who gives a particular account of all these transactions. By this desertion of the country it became wholly desolate; only some of the neighbouring nations seem to have settled in some parts of it. Jer. xii, 14. Ez. xxxvi, 4, 5.

27. From this it appears that Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty five years. For Jehoiakim was carried captive in the eighth year of his reign, and had been a prisoner thirty seven years. But according to the canon of Ptolemy

lemy he reigned only forty three years; and therefore, it is supposed that he reigned two years along with his father.

30. The reason of this distinction is not mentioned, and unless this favourable treatment was continued in the next reign it could not have been long, for Evilmerodach is not supposed to have reigned more than two years; but as it is said to have continued as long as Jehoiakim lived, it is probable that it did extend beyond the reign of Evilmerodach.

NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF

CHRONICLES.

THE books that bear this title were evidently compiled from others, and those written at different times, some before, and others after the Babylonish captivity. They begin with tables of genealogy, collected from the books of Moses and other records; but having been often transcribed, much confusion has been introduced into many of the names, which it is now impossible to clear up. The foundation, however,

was

was evidently a real history, and real genealogies. For such particulars of names, and other circumstances, would never have been invented by any person, as no imaginable purpose could be answered by it; and the hazard of making mistakes, and being thereby exposed when they were first published, would have been very great.

The history is chiefly confined to that of the kings of Judah, little notice being taken of those of the ten tribes. It was, therefore, probably extracted chiefly from the records of that kingdom, written by the high-priests, or persons appointed for that purpose. Many of the prophets too appear to have been writers, and their writings contained many historical circumstances, as do those of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, which are now extant.

Ch. I. 36. Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, and by her he had Amalek, v. 39.

38. Seir was the ancient lord of the country, and they are his descendants that are here mentioned.

Ch. II. 7. As an example of a change of names by mistaking one letter for another, it may be sufficient to observe that this *Zimri* is in Josh. vii, 18 called *Zabdi*, the *z* and *d* in Hebrew being easily mistaken the one for the other, tho' the *b* and the *m* are more unlike.

11. There is a chasm here, but there is no means of supplying it. There is another v. 14, and also v. 15, and insuperable difficulties in v. 17. Ho.

49. The term *father* is supposed to be used in this place for *prince*, or *chief*, because both Madianah and Gibeon are names of cities.

Ch. III. 1. This Daniel is called Chileab. 2 Sam. iii, 3.

3. Eglah is thought to be the same with Michal, the daughter of Saul. She is called his wife by way of eminence, as the first that he had, and intitled to peculiar privileges.

13. Johannah is supposed to have been the eldest son, but to have died before his father.

19. It is much questioned whether this Zerubbabel be the same with him that was governor after the return from Babylon.

24. Here mention is made of thirteen generations after the captivity, which at a moderate computation will bring the history to the time of Alexander the Great. And as mention is made of Jadda, Neh. xii, 11, who was high priest when that conqueror came to Jerusalem; it is probable that soon after this time the last hand was put to the canonical books of the Old Testament. It would be natural for a transcriber to continue the genealogies to his own time; as with respect to them there would be no danger of making any mistake, and this would be much easier than to continue the history of events.

Ch. IV. 1. Here the word *sons* evidently means *descendants*, for Hezron was the son of Pharez, and the father of Carmi, the same with Chalubai, and Caleb, Ch. ii, 9, 18.

2. Zora was the name of a place in the tribe of Judah.

10. The piety of Jabez being noticed in this place, it

It is probable that about this time many others fell into idolatry.

17. Miriam appears to have been the name of men as well as of women.

27 The increase of the tribe of Judah is very remarkable, compared with that of the other tribes.

39. There was a place of this name in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv, 58, and another place called Gadera, v. 36. Perhaps the Simeonites conquered it from the Canaanites.

40. The Simeonites, wanting room, seem to have conquered a tribe of Arabs, and also some part of the land of Edom, and to have taken possession of them.

43. These people being in the Southern part of the country, and mixed with the Arabs, were perhaps left unmolested at the Babylonish captivity.

Chap. V. 2. He had a double portion of the inheritance, which was one right of the first born; but Judah had the pre-eminence with respect to authority, which likewise appertained to the first born.

6. It appears from this that some one person was always considered as the chief of every tribe; probably presiding in their councils, and commanding them when they went to war.

9. Their right extended to this river, but much of the country was a sandy desert.

10. Several historical circumstances are recorded in these tables of genealogy which we do not find in any other part of the history. These Hagarites, or Ishmaelites, were not of the devoted nations, but there might be other just causes of war with them.

16. They had that part of the country which was not given to the Reubenites, or the half tribe of Manasse. There were two Sharons, this on the East side of Jordan, and another near Joppa, Josh. xii, 17, 18.

17. It appears from this that accounts of genealogies were taken at particular times by order of the chief magistrate; and in no other country whatever were genealogies so regularly kept, and this is certainly one mark of superior civilization. Not only were histories written of public transactions by public officers, and by prophets who mixed historical anecdotes with their predictions and exhortations, but even many private persons kept written accounts of what related to their own families.

22. Of this war no mention is made in the preceding history, and it seems to have been different from that mentioned v. 10; tho' the Hagarites were their enemies in both. At this time other tribes of Ishmaelites joined them. Jehu and Rephesh are mentioned Gen. xxv, 15. The Hagarites are thought to have been the Agraioi of the Greek writers, rather than the Hagareni. As no tribe had its name from Nabajoth, the eldest son of Ishmael, it is thought that the Nabatheni of the Greek writers are those that are called Ishmaelites in the scriptures; being, as it were, heirs to the name of their ancestor. They inhabited the best part of Arabia Petraea, near to the Midianites. This war is said to have been of God, tho' the enemies were not of the devoted nations. The cause of war, was, no doubt just, and they had probably consulted the oracle, as they were required to do, in the conduct of it.

23 They

23. They extended their boundary to the North.

25. Notwithstanding this great success and prosperity, these people beyond Jordan, like the other tribes, and perhaps before any of them, abandoned their religion, and worshipped the gods of the people whom they had conquered; and on this account they were the first to suffer in consequence of it by the invasion of the Assyrians.

26. These places are in Media, whither it was said before that the ten tribes were carried captive. Harai is supposed to have been the country of the Arii, having had its name from *har* a mountain, being a hilly country. Gozan is thought to have been the river that is usually called Cyrus, and near to it was the city called by Ptolemy Gauzania.

Ch. VI. 14. Seraiah was carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, and by him he was put to death. He was the twelfth high priest from Zadoc.

15. Joshua, who returned from the captivity, was the son of Jehozadac.

28. From this it appears that Samuel was a Levite, being descended from Izhar the uncle of Aaron.

32. This tabernacle was that which David had prepared for the ark in Jerusalem.

33. Samuel is here called Shemuel. Heman, who is thought to have been the composer of some of the psalms, was his grandson.

39. Frequent mention is made of Asaph in the titles of the psalms. He is called the brother of Heman, being his near relation.

44. From

44. From this it appears that there were three principal fingers, or directors of choirs, in the temple service. Heman, descended from Kohath, was the principal, and his place was in the centre. Asaph, descended from Gershon, was at his right hand, and Ethan, from Merari, was at his left; and in this order did their descendants take their stations.

47. It is observable that no descendants of Moses, tho' a Levite, are mentioned as intitled to any place of distinction on that account.

57. The cities of the priests were distinct from those of the Levites, and they were all in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, or Benjamin. Eleven only are recited here, but two more are mentioned in Josh. xxi, 11, viz. Jattah, and Gibeon.

Ch. VII. 6. This 'genealogy of Benjamin' is not only confused, says Dr. Geddes, and corrupted like some others, but inconsistent with that in the next chapter, and others in the Pentateuch. He suspects that the genealogy of Dan stood originally in this place.

15. Marks of corruption are most evident in this chapter, as is observed by Le Clerc.

21. This piece of history is not mentioned in any other place. At this time the Israelites, tho' in Egypt, were not in servitude, and therefore at liberty to engage in war with any other people. What was the occasion of this quarrel with the people of Gath, and why those of the other tribes did not join the Ephraimites in it, is not known.

23. The word *Beriah* signifies in a bad condition.

Ch. VIII

Ch. VIII. 1. There is much confusion in this account of the descendants of Benjamin. It enlarges on the family of Saul, and shews how this tribe increased, after having been almost exterminated in the war with the other tribes.

2. Benjamin had ten sons. Gen. xxvi. 21.

6. It appears from this, and the case of Ruth, that women were not intended in the law for the exclusion of particular nations from the congregation of Israel.

12. Ono and Lud, which was the same with Lydda, were neighbouring cities Ex. xxxiii. Neh. vi. 37.

26. Here is another instance of the same name being common to men and women.

28—39. The genealogy contained in these verses is repeated Ch. ix, 34—44. by a comparison of which several corruptions in the text are discovered.

29. His proper name was Jekiel, as appears from Ch. ix. 35. and he is called the father of Gibeon, because he was the chief of the Benjamites who inhabited that place.

33. Kish was the son of Abiel, but a different person from another of the same name mentioned 1 Sam. xiv.

40. The word here rendered *archers* signifies *those who tread the bow*, because their bows were so strong, that they made use of their feet in drawing them.

Ch. IX. 1. Here we see the great attention that was paid to genealogies, and no doubt to the general history of the nation, by a people whom unbelievers affect to consider as barbarians.

2. This was after the return from Babylon. The Nethenims were those of the devoted and other conquered nations whom David gave, as the word signifies, or appointed, to assist the Levites, as the Gibeonites had been appointed by Joshua to the same services before.

3. Hence it appears that some of the ten tribes returned with those of Judah and Benjamin, as they all had leave to do, tho' very few availed themselves of it.

10. This catalogue of the priests differs much from that in Nehemiah.

11. This ruler in the house of God was not the high priest, but one who particularly attended to the business of the temple, perhaps under the direction of the high priest.

18. This is thought to shew that after their return they did not sacrifice on mount Moriah, where the temple had stood, but on mount Zion, where the king's palace had been, and a temporary tabernacle created by David for the reception of the ark.

19. This is thought to be another proof of the same thing. See also v. 21—23.

22. Hence it appears that the regulations established by David for the orderly service of the sanctuary were suggested by Samuel.

33. Those whose business it was to sing during divine service were exempt from every other duty. They either sung, played upon some instrument, or instructed others.

35. This is a repetition of what was said in the preceeding chapter v. 29. &c. which is a proof of carelessness

lessness in the copier ; but carelessness is the reverse of design, and far from being a mark of forgery.

Ch. X. 4. There is very little in this chapter that is not contained in 1 Sam.

10. This is called the house of Ashtaroth 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. Dagon, therefore, must have been a different deity ; and as the former was a female character, the latter must have been a male.

Ch. XI. 1. No account is here given of Ishbosheth, the principal object of the book being the history of David, and his successors in the kingdom of Judah.

3. It is evident that the divine designation of David to be king was well known in the country, and that this was the principal reason of the people's choice of him, tho' it might have been expected that they would have proceeded to this immediately on the death of Saul.

8. *And he built the circuit from Millo, and round to (the beginning of) that circuit, and Joab was made governor of the city. K.*

10. This account of David's worthies differs in some particulars from that in the book of Samuel ; but they were undoubtedly the same originally, and the variations have been occasioned by the transcriber, as Dr. Kennicott has clearly shewn.

28. In 2 Sam. xxiii, 26, it is Igal the brother of Nathan.

42. *But the thirty were above him. K.*

Ch. XII. 1. The contents of this chapter are not mentioned in the book of Samuel. It appears that

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notwith-

notwithstanding Saul's persecution of David, he had many zealous friends in all parts of the country, and some in Saul's own tribe and family.

2. Much practice must have been necessary to acquire this power ; and what was gained by the use of the left hand, must have been in some measure lost by the disuse of the other, so that perhaps it was no great advantage on the whole.

4. There were probably thirty Benjamites in all.

14. They did not bring all these men with them, for the followers of David during his persecution never exceeded six hundred ; but they had either been commanders of these numbers in their respective tribes, or were made so by David afterwards.

19. It is probable that while Saul was engaged with the Philistines, the nations on the East of Jordan invaded the country, and were repelled by these persons, who crossed the river at this time. And as the passage of the river is so particularly mentioned, it must have been deemed a difficult and bold undertaking. Perhaps they were obliged to swim over it.

17. These being Benjamites, he might reasonably have some suspicion of their intention. The thirty mentioned before were the relations of Saul, perhaps particularly known to David ; but these might be unknown to him.

18. He seems to have spoken with particular earnestness, respecting David's suspicion of them.

21. These were probably the people who plundered Ziclai in David's absence.

22 The

22. The *host of God* probably means the stars, an expression often made use of to denote a great number. Thus the posterity of Abraham are said to be as the stars for multitude.

27. He was not the high-priest, for Abiathar was in that office; but he might be the head of the tribe for civil affairs.

28. The Hebrew priests were not exempted from serving in the army, any more than priests in heathen countries.

31. They were deputed by the rest of the tribe to signify the general choice of David.

32. All that was meant by this language was probably that they were men of good understanding, judges of what was proper to be done on the occasion.

39. This was after the death of Ishbosheth, being a solemn deputation from all the tribes, even the most distant ones, and forming a great army, more than it could be supposed that David was prepared to entertain.

Ch. XIII. 3. Tho' this proposal was made immediately upon David's accession, it was not executed till after what is related in the next chapter, as appears from the book of Samuel. In the time of Saul the ark was suffered to remain at Kirjathjearim; and in the latter part of his reign he seems to have had no thought about religion, till in his extreme distress he applied to the oracle without receiving any answer, and then to the witch of Endor.

7. They seem to have given no attention to the directions for the decent conveyance of the ark contained in the writings of Moses, tho' not from a want of respect

respect for it, as their conduct shews. And as it had come from the Philistines in a carriage, they might have been led by that circumstance to adopt the same method.

Ch. XIV. 12. It appears to have been no unusual thing to carry the images of their gods to the field of battle, hoping by this means more effectually to engage their assistance. David on capturing them, did not preserve them as trophies of his victory, but to shew his just contempt of them, he destroyed them all.

Ch. XV. 1. All the wives of David would of course require separate suites of rooms, tho' they might be all under the same roof. He did not think proper, tho' for what reason does not appear, to bring the original tabernacle from Gibeon, where the morning and evening sacrifices continued to be offered, tho' the ark was in Jerusalem.

12. Their *sanctifying* themselves consisted in abstaining from every cause of legal impurity.

13. The king was now become sensible of the former inattention to the proper method of conveying the ark, as not sufficiently respectful.

16. The introduction of music into the service of the sanctuary was the work of David, the ritual of Moses containing no directions about it. Music, however, as well as dancing, accompanied with the recitation of hymns in honour of their gods, was used by all the heathens in their acts of worship; but whether this custom of theirs was prior to that of David, is unknown. In the Hebrew service vocal music always accompanied instrumental, and the hymns they recited are contained in

in the book of psalms. In this part of the service all the people might join.

18. There is probably something imperfect in the text of this place. *Ben* denotes the son of some person mentioned immediately afterwards. The LXX adds *Azzah*, thought to be the same with *Azaziah*, v. 21.

21. Three kinds of instruments seem to be mentioned here; the *cymbals*, which were of brass, and which, like the drum, had but one note; *flutes*, or wind music, and the *harp*, or a stringed instrument. They were probably sometimes used separately, and sometimes all together, signified by the term *lamnatzeab*, or as we say, *the whole band*.

22. This was probably for the vocal part of the performance, as it immediately follows the account of the instrumental music. Some, however, render it *for the carriage of the ark*.

Ch. XVI. 4. This service was performed every day in the tabernacle which he had erected for the ark; but the morning and evening sacrifices were made at Gibeon, at the altar in the original tabernacle.

8. This psalm is the 96th, and part of the 105th. It seems to have been sung every day, whatever other psalms or hymns might be added to it. It is an animated commemoration of the divine goodness to mankind in general, and to the Hebrew nation in particular, not omitting to notice the superiority of the true God to the gods of the heathens, and calling upon all mankind to join in that worship.

31. There is a peculiar sublimity in these sentiments, and in this invitation of all mankind to rejoice in the divine

vine government, from the full persuasion of the universal benefit of it.

35. There is something remarkable in this part of the hymn, and it is not found in either of the psalms above mentioned. It has, therefore, been supposed, and with much probability, that it was added by Ezra after the captivity, when it was sung in the temple that was then built.

40. From this it is evident that the morning and the evening sacrifices were not made at Jerusalem, but at the altar in Gibeon, till the erection of the temple.

41. That is to sing the sacred hymns, one of which was perhaps that above mentioned, of which that response, as it may be called, *for his mercy endureth for ever*, which occurs in many others, makes a part. A psalm in which it occurs seems to have been sung every day after the return from the captivity, as appears from Ezra iii. 11. *And they sung together by course, in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel.* Nor could any sentiment be more proper to be continually impressed upon the mind.

Ch. XVII. 4. These expressions, and those in v. 9, refer, in the proper and literal sense of the words, to a time that is yet future; tho' in a qualified sense they may be understood of the state of the kingdom under David and his immediate successors.

16. This, no doubt, was spoken before the ark, in the tabernacle which he had erected.

Ch. XVIII. 1. Instead of Gath and her towns, it is

is in 2 Sam. viii. Methog-ammah, which is perhaps another name for the same district.

4. In 2 Sam. viii. 4, it is *seven hundred*.

Ch. XIX. 1. The history in this chapter is the same, with hardly any variation, with that in 2 Sam. xvi.

4. To shave half the beard was the greatest of all insults, and to which the vilest criminals only were subject. MARTIN.

6. This Maacah was a city in the land of Canaan, bordering upon Syria, and therefore called Aram Maacah.

7. Those thirty thousand chariots must mean so many men who fought in chariots. For in ancient times each chariot had only one warrior, and a person to conduct it. In the book of Samuel it is said they hired twenty thousand footmen from Zobah, and twelve thousand men of Ashtob, which make the thirty thousand of this place.

Ch. XX. The history of Uriah and Bathsheba is omitted here, probably because it was related at large in the book of Samuel.

And he put them to the saws, CONG. and as supported by the parallel passage 2 Sam. xii, 31.

Ch. XXI. 1. This is the first time that the word *Satan* occurs in this history; and it is evident that it does not signify a distinct intelligent person, but the source of evil, or improper thoughts that arose in David's own mind, viz. his pride and ostentation. In the corresponding passage in the book of Samuel it is said that God, being angry with Israel, moved David to

to number them; and this is perfectly consistent with the other account. The punishment of the people was a proper measure in the conduct of providence suiting their case; and the conduct of David was the means by which this punishment was brought about. And in the language of scripture whatever takes place according to the usual course of nature is ascribed to the God of nature; as the obstinacy of Pharaoh, and the envy and malice of Joseph's brethren.

5. This account differs considerably from that in 2 Sam. xxiv 9.

6. It is something extraordinary that Joab should see this business in its true light, while David did not. But his pride was not interested in the event.

9. Gad might be the person appointed to write the records of his reign; as it was the custom for all the princes in the East to have such persons. Their accounts were examined after the death of the prince. This is now the custom in Abissynia. *Fragments* Vol. ii, p. 21.

17. In this David discovered an ingenuous disposition, and a just concern that the innocent people, as he considered them, should suffer for his offence.

20. In the books of Samuel there is no mention of *Ornan*, or as it is here called *Araunah* and his sons seeing the angel. From this and other circumstances of variation, it is evident that the two accounts were originally different, tho' in substance the same, and not one of them copied from the other.

25. In 2 Sam. xxiv, 24, it is fifty shekels of silver.

26. This circumstance, which is a very important one,

one, of the sacrifices being consumed by fire from heaven, is not in the other account.

30. At first the business was urgent, and David would not defer his sacrifice till he could go to Gibeon; and finding that God accepted his sacrifice in this place, he might think himself authorized to continue to sacrifice there. But this is not inferred with certainty. This was only an occasional sacrifice. For Solomon sacrificed at Gibeon till the temple was built, on mount Moriah.

Ch. XXII. 1 From this time David seems to have determined that this should be the place in which the temple should be built, as it afterwards was by Solomon:

9. David's design to build the temple appears to have been prior to the birth of Solomon; and by forming the design, and making these expensive preparations, he had more merit with respect to it than his son.

14. *Ten thousand talents.* JOSEPHUS. P.

In the account of the gold omit the word *a thousand* and *one of the thousands*, in that of the silver. CONJ. HO.

Upon any mode of computation, if there be no mistake in these numbers, the quantity of gold collected by David was immense. Witius makes it amount to twenty thousand five hundred tons of gold.

Ch. XXII. 4. There must have been many more than could have been employed about the temple at the same time; but they might all take their turns, or be ready to be called upon when they were wanted. Six thousand might well be employed in the greater or lesser courts of justice. At least this number might qualify themselves for this office, and serve when they were

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required

required. The same observation may be made with respect to the porters in the next verse. Four thousand persons could not be wanted to open and shut the gates and doors of the temple, much less those of the tabernacle.

9. Omit the sons of Shemei, Shelomith and Hazei and Haran, being contrary to what follows v. 10. CONJ. HO.

17. It is remarkable that, tho' the descendants of Moses were pretty numerous, they were all ranked with common Levites, inferior to the posterity of Aaron; which is a sufficient proof that his institutions were not his own, or that he was a man of no ambition. For no man would prefer the sons of his brother to his own.

24. In some offices they served at twenty, and in others not till they were thirty years of age. Num. viii, 24.

30. Sacred hymns were sung accompanied with vocal and instrumental music, every morning and evening in the service of the sanctuary.

Ch. XXIV. 3. It does not appear that David acted by any divine direction in this distribution of the priests and Levites. He would, no doubt, consult with the principal of them; and as the regulations that he made were for the convenience of the whole body, and the several parts were assigned by lot, there could not have been any reasonable objection to them. In some way or other, however, he must have thought himself sufficiently authorised to make these regulations.

4. There being twice as many families of the descendants of Eleazar as of those of Ithamar, in forming these

these twenty four courses he naturally allowed twice as many to the former as he did to the latter.

6. They chose by lot, first one of the descendants of Eleazar, then one of those of Ithamar, till those of the latter were all drawn. After this all the remaining lots were necessarily from the descendants of Eleazar.

7. The first course was reckoned the most honourable. Josephus prides himself in being of it. Mattathias, the father of the Maccabees was also of it. 1 Mac. ii, 54. Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, was of the eighth course, viz. that of Abiah. Each of these courses served a week, beginning with the sabbath. At the public festivals, when all the priests and Levites were present, they assisted if necessary, and they were all intitled to a share of the sacrifices. Deut. xviii, 6—7.

19. From the phrase *as the Lord God commanded him* (it being supposed that the word *him* refers to David) he is thought to have received some particular instructions on this subject.

20. Several of the descendants are mentioned here, which do not occur in any other place.

31. The attendance of the Levites was determined by lot, as well as that of the priests; and the meaning of this last clause probably is, that those of the elder branch took their lot equally with those of the younger, without any preference of one to the other.

Ch. XXV. 1. By the *captains of the host*, are to be understood in this place the chief of the priests. Here singing, accompanied with music, is called *prophecyng*. Dr. Lighfoot points out the particular psalms that were

fung in the temple every day in the week, but his authorities could only be those of the later Jews.

5. The meaning of the phrase *to lift up the horn* is uncertain. It may be that God was pleased to honour Heman by giving him so numerous an offspring. Mr. BRUCE.

7. Twelve of these fingers, with their superintendant, were in waiting every week; twelve times twenty four amounting to two hundred and eighty-eight.

9. It will appear from this account that no regard was paid to primogeniture, the lots having disposed the courses in a very different order.

Ch. XXVI. 6. Several of the services about the temple required strength and agility.

15. The word *asupim* Dr. Geddes renders store rooms.

16. This was the gate that led from the king's house to the temple, the valley between being filled with a raised causeway.

18. Dr. Geddes conjectures that the word *parbar* here used means the armoury. Some think it was the gate that led to Millo at the West end of mount Moriah,

20. The *treasure of the house* means things of value in constant use, while *the dedicated things* were money, and other things of value deposited in the rooms adjoining to the temple.

22. As some parts of this treasure were committed to the custody of the porters, other parts, Dr. Lightfoot thinks, were committed to other classes of Levites.

24 This

24. This person, and Shelomith, mentioned v. 28, are the only descendants of Moses who are said to have been advanced to any office of consequence.

28. This appropriation of treasure for national and religious uses seems to have been begun with Samuel.

29. That is, business out of Jerusalem, as that of presiding in courts of judicature, and other employments of a civil nature.

31. Jazer was a city given to the descendants of Merari.

32. This great number might be wanted for a part of the country so distant from Jerusalem, as requiring a more careful inspection, especially in things relating to religion, being in the neighbourhood of idolatrous nations. But both Levites and priests might discharge civil offices, even those of war, if their assistance was wanted.

Ch. XXVII. 1. After the preceding regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, we have an account of what David did with respect to things of a civil nature. Besides a national militia, such as composed all antient armies, twenty four thousand men attended on the person of the king, and were changed every month; and they were probably independent of the Cherethites and Pelethites.

7. These courses must have been fixed at the beginning of David's reign, for Asahel was killed soon after his accession. He was succeeded by his son.

8. He was probably the valiant man called Sham-mah, 2 Sam. xxiii, 11.

9. He is mentioned in the list of worthies in 2 Sam. xxiii, 26, and in this book, Ch. xi, 18. Several others here mentioned were of the worthies of whom a particular register was kept.

16. Each of the tribes had a chief attending to the affairs of the tribe, as was the case from the beginning.

17. Here we again see that the head of the tribe of Levi for civil affairs was not the high priest.

18. The chief must have been elected. For the brother of David can hardly be supposed to have been the hereditary chief of so considerable a tribe as that of Judah; He is called Eliab, 1 Sam. xvi, 6.

21. The tribe of Manasseh being divided by the river Jordan, each part of it had its separate chief.

22. No mention is made of the tribe of Gad, or of Asher, and for what reason does not appear.

23. David seems to have thought it unlawful to number all the people, and therefore contented himself with taking an account of those who were of a proper age for bearing arms.

24. It is evident that a register was kept of all public transactions; but this being found to be irregular, it was not so recorded; tho', the fact, being notorious, is related by the historian.

25. This is an account of the management of the king's private estate.

31. No mention is made of *hogs* any more than in the account of the wealth of Job, or of any Israelite. Gadara, where hogs were kept in our Saviour's time, was a Grecian city, as Josephus says.

Chap.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. The events mentioned in this chapter must have been subsequent to the attempt of Adonijah to make himself king. This was a solemn assembly to settle the kingdom under Solomon; and the behaviour and speech of David on the occasion are exceedingly interesting. They shew his zeal for the honour of God, and the welfare of the kingdom, as well as his affection for his son.

3. The divine disapprobation of war and bloodshed is strongly expressed by this circumstance. Tho' the wars of David had been just, and he had been favoured with signal success, and even by supernatural assistance, yet he was considered as in a manner polluted by shedding blood, and on that account only not fit to erect a temple to the God of peace and love.

6. This designation of Solomon to succeed his father was made before he was born, and was probably announced at the time, or soon after. See 2. Sam. vii. 13.

9. This address to Solomon is truly affecting, reminding him of his duty to God, his own personal interest in adhering to it, and the impossibility of his escaping the divine judgments if he neglected it. God's perfect knowledge of the hearts of men is particularly insisted upon. The heathens had no such exalted ideas of any of their gods.

16. In the tabernacle there was only one table; but in the temple there were ten, some of which must have been of silver. [There was also the same addition to the number of candlesticks, and it cannot well be supposed but that the room being so much larger, the lamps be-

longing to them all were lighted, atleast on some occasions ; and the number of priests being increased, the loaves of shew bread were probably increased also.

18 — *The pattern of the place of the Cherubims, Ho.*

19. It was evident from this, that the form of the temple had been particularly described to David, as that of the tabernacle had been to Moses ; so that nothing relating to either of them had been left to their discretion.

Ch. XXIX. 2. David had so much more merit than Solomon with respect to the building of the temple, that the latter seems to have had little to do besides superintending the execution of the design.

3. 4. These numbers must have been magnified by the Jewish transcriber. Ho.

4. All the overlaying in the temple was with gold. The silver, therefore must have been used chiefly in the adjoining buildings. The precious stones was disposed of, tho' in what particular manner we are not informed, as ornaments in the building.

8. What was given by David and his princes for the building of the temple, Mr. Bruce says, exceeded in value eight hundred millions of English money, if the talent was that of the Hebrews, and not a weight of the same denomination the value of which was less, and used in trafic for the precious metals. The value of a Hebrew talent appears from Exod. xxxvii. 25, 26, to have been three thousand shekels. *Travels* p. 429.

From the gold being said to have been of *Ophir*, it is probable that David had established a navigation to that place after his conquest of Idumea,

16 There

16. There is much true piety in this sentiment, acknowledging that all we have is from God, that we can only give to him what he has given to us, and that even the disposition to act in this pious manner comes from him.

20. Here the word commonly rendered *to worship* cannot signify more than the act of bowing, or prostration, because it is applied to the king as well as to God, and certainly with a very different meaning.

22. Zadock appears to have been appointed high-priest in the life time of David, tho' he did not act in that capacity till the time of Solomon.

29. This book of Samuel is probably the first part of those which now bear his name. Those of Nathan and Gad have not been preserved, unless the latter part of those books were compiled out of them; and this is not at all improbable. The loss of many of the books referred to in this history is, no doubt, a subject of regret. But, as Bishop Patric piously remarks, God knows better than we what was fit to be preserved for the edification of his church.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF

CHRONICLES.

CHAPTER I. 2. This assembly was of the same nature with that which David called before his death, when Solomon was acknowledged as king, and when he addressed him and them in the solemn manner that is represented in the preceding book.

3. The sacrifices of David were in Jerusalem where the ark was, in a tabernacle constructed by himself for its reception; but the national altar remained in the original tabernacle at Gibeon; and Solomon, being a young man, had not the excuse that David had for not leaving Jerusalem and attending there. It is evident, however, that the ceremonial of the worship prescribed in the laws of Moses was not rigidly adhered to till after the building of the temple.

17. It appears from this that each chariot was drawn by four horses, the price of a set being four times as much as that of a single horse.

Ch. II. 6. As Solomon could not mean to offend Hiram by this message, it seems to have been generally acknowledged that the God of the Hebrews was superior to any other. This idea, however, of the universal presence of God, must have astonished this heathen prince if he had not heard of it before.

12 Here

12. Here Hiram acknowledges the God of the Hebrews to have been the creator of the heavens and the earth. The sentiment, was not, however at all inconsistent with his own idolatry, as he might think that particular departments in the government of the world might be assigned to inferior deities.

14 Both this Hiram employed by Solomon, and Bezaleel, and Aboliab employed by Moses, were skilled in arts of very different natures, in metals, as well as in linen and woolen, &c. which is a proof that the arts in general were at that time in their infant state. At present the most ingenious men find sufficient employment for their genius not only in one art, but in single branches of it.

17. These were the remains of the devoted nations, who had conformed to the Hebrew religion.

Ch. III. 4. That the height of this porch should be one hundred and twenty cubits, so much higher than the temple itself, is very improbable. In the book of kings it is said to have been thirty cubits, and the antient versions in general make it twenty cubits.

6. It is not said in what manner the precious stones were disposed ; but it must have been in such places, and in such a manner, as was thought to be most ornamental. Parvaim has been thought to be Taprobana, or Ceylon, in the East ; the words having some resemblance to each other.

9. Each nail by which the plates of gold were fastened to the boards is supposed to have cost fifty shekels, so that probably their heads were large, and formed in some curious manner. What are here called *chambers* must

must mean the upper floor or roof of the house, which was covered with gold as well as the walls. The rooms that are called chambers in the building that surrounded the temple were those in which were kept the wine, oil, &c. for the service of the sanctuary, as well as for the keeping of other things of value, and the accommodation of the priests and Levites during their attendance ; and could not require to have been fitted up in so expensive a manner.

10.—*Two cherubims of wood.* LXX.

13. By their faces being *inward*, or, as it is literally rendered, *towards the house*, is probably to be understood their looking towards the holy place, where the priests attended, and not towards the wall of the most holy place.

14. In 1. Kings vi. 31. it is said that *for the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive tree, the lintel and side parts were a fifth part of the wall.* Part, therefore, of the partition between the holy and most holy place was of wood, and in the centre of it was this curtain, or veil. In the book of Kings there is no mention of any veil. It is evident from this, and other circumstances, that the two accounts were not originally the same, but taken by different persons.

15. Read *eighteen cubits*, to agree with 1 Kings vii.

15. and Jer. lii, 21. CONJ. Ho.

Ch. IV. 9. As this great court must have been for the people, and it had doors, it is evident that the whole space was inclosed with a wall, tho' there is no mention of this in the book of Kings.

16 *And*

16. *And all the instruments did Hiram make, and bring to king Solomon, CONJ. &c.*

19. It should seem from this account, that all the tables were overlaid with gold; but then what use was made of the silver?

Ch. V. 9. The account from which this was taken must have been written while the temple was standing.

13. They probably sung the whole of the one hundred and thirty sixth psalm, in which this is the response.

Ch. VI. 11. This speech and prayer of Solomon, tho' the same in substance with those in the book of Kings, are not exactly the same, so that they were not copied from the same original.

41. These words are in Psalm cxxx. 8. 9.

Ch. VII. 1. There is no mention of this extraordinary circumstance in the book of Kings, but only of the cloud, the symbol of the divine presence, filling the house after the priests had put the ark in its place.

Ch. VIII. 2. In the book of Kings it was only said that Hiram did not like the cities that Solomon gave him. We here learn that they were returned to him, and that he improved them.

14. David is here called a *man of God*, which is of the same import with *prophet*. Moses is generally so called, and both David and Moses had similar communications made to them, to Moses concerning the tabernacle, and to David concerning the temple.

18. In the parallel passage it is *four hundred and twenty*.

Chap:

Ch IX. 1. The history in this chapter differs in nothing material from that in the book of Kings.

29. In the book of Kings we are only referred to *the book of the acts of Solomon*, but here we are referred to the writings of two prophets that are not now extant, those of Ahijah, and these of Iddo, who also wrote the acts of Rehoboam, and is supposed to have lived in the reign of Aza, Ch. xv, 1, where he is called *Oded*. The most important particulars in these books being copied into those of Kings and Chronicles may have been the cause of their being neglected and lost.

Ch. XI. 1. This great body of Levites would be a considerable addition of strength to the kingdom of Judah.

15. The word here translated *demons*, properly signifies *goats*; and because the Egyptians worshiped goats, it is thought by some that this species of idolatry was introduced from Egypt, where Jeroboam had resided. But as in all other places the *sin of Jeroboam* is described as consisting in nothing more than the worship of the calves, which represented the attributes of the true God, it is not easy to say what other objects of worship are intended in this place.

Ch. XII. 1. This must have been the worship of some heathen deity, for it could not be that of the golden calves of Jeroboam.

13.—Sixteen years when he began to reign. CONJ. Ho.

Ch. XIII. The three numbers were originally *forty thousand, eighty thousand, and fifty thousand*. K.

17 The

17. The preceding excellent expostulation of Abijah had probably some effect in discouraging the Israelites. This is the greatest slaughter that is mentioned in any history. But considering the great numbers of which ancient armies often consisted, the manner of fighting in those times, and the little quarter that was usually given, the account is not incredible.

Ch. XIV. 5. It is probable from the term used in the original, that these were images in honour of the sun.

9. *Three thousand three hundred chariots.* CONJ. HO: This immense army argues the Ethiopians or Cushites, to have been a numerous and powerful nation. At this time, as well as in that of the queen of Sheba, it probably consisted of people on both sides of the Red sea. This king might also be in the possession of Egypt, especially as the Lubim, or Lybians, are said to have been in his army, Ch. xvi, 8.

Zeresh, according to Mr. Bruce was a Cushite negro, a prince of the Cushites who were carriers in the Isthmus. They carried their provisions of flour and water with them, and could be assembled in a short time in very great numbers for any particular expedition. *Travels*, p. 407.

Ch. XV. 5. This must refer to the time of the judges, in much of which period the worship of God was neglected, and the people suffered in consequence of it.

8. Probably the altar wanted some repairs. It can not be supposed that it had not been made use of in the preceding part of this reign.

13. This was enforcing the laws of Moses respecting idolatry:

17 He

17. He took away the high places in Judah, but not in the ten tribes. Perhaps this was not in his power.

Ch. XVI. 1. *In the sixth and twentieth year, Conf. CAPELLUS and Hox*

Josephus supposes that the original reading was twenty six years, which will then be the last of Baasha, for he began his reign in the third year of Aha, and reigned only twenty four years.

7. There is nothing of this history in the book of Kings.

10. It is extraordinary that so pious a prince as Aha in general was should be so unreasonable, as to behave in this manner to a person whose divine mission he does not appear to have questioned. It can only be said that persons who have long been in the possession of power can ill bear contradiction.

12. These physicians were probably persons who pretended to cure by means of charms, as was the case with all the ancients; and this practice favoured of idolatry.

14. They did not burn the body; for this was never the custom of the Jews, but they might burn spices at the funeral. In Jer. xxxv. 5. it is said that they would burn odours for Zedekiah. At great funerals costly entertainments were usually made, and the burning of incense closed all their feasts.

Ch. XVII. 6. That is, those in which the heathen gods were worshiped. But it appears from Ch. xx. 23, and from 1 Kings, xxii, 42, that he left those that were dedicated to the true God.

7. We read of no other prince who took the same
care

care to have the people well instructed in the law. But it might have become more necessary than it had been in any former time. To do this more effectually, the king sent his own officers, men, no doubt, zealous in the business; along with the priests and Levites, whose proper office it was to give the instruction. Had the laws and admonitions of Moses on this subject been observed, this could not have been necessary; but they had been much neglected. It is pretty evident from this history, that the weekly assembling in synagogues for the reading of the law and prayer, was not in use at this time.

9. Copies of the law were at this time, no doubt, scarce; but they were not unknown. What a disposition to cavalling then must it shew, to suppose that the copy of the laws that was found in the temple in the time of Josiah was the first that was ever made?

16. He had probably shewn particular zeal in the reformation undertaken by Jehoshaphat.

Ch. XVIII. 1. His son married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. She must have engaged to conform to his religion, and his views were, no doubt, very good, viz. to preserve the peace between the two kingdoms, to unite their forces against any common enemy, and perhaps to bring them eventually under one head.

3. The whole of this chapter is so much the same with that in the book of Kings, that they were probably copied from one common original.

Ch. XIX. 3. There is something probably omitted in this place. He was perhaps told what his offense

was, tho' he might easily suppose it; and some account was probably given of the impression which this admonition made upon him.

4. It is evident that Ahab acquiesced in Jehoshaphat's keeping possession of the places which had been conquered from the ten tribes; and by this means the kingdom of Judah would probably be equal in extent and in power to that of Israel.

5. Sufficient provision had been made in the laws of Moses for the establishment of courts of justice through all the country, but they had been neglected, as had been his directions for reading the laws to the people.

Ch. XX, 1. *With them of the Edomites.* CONJ. HO.

2.—*On this side of Edom.* CONJ. CALMET.

5. Some suppose, and not improbably, that this *new court* was that of the women, as it is certain there was such a court in the temple of Herod, who is not said to have made any innovation in the structure. It was a space separated, tho' perhaps only by lattice work, from the next outer court, on the East side. These women might attend unseen by men, as is the custom in many of their synagogues at present.

6. This conduct of Jehoshaphat much resembles that of Hezekiah on the invasion of the Assyrians, and the event was similar.

12. It is rather extraordinary that the forces of Jehoshaphat, considering what he had done to increase them, should not have been equal to those of these nations. Many tribes of Arabs, not particularly mentioned, must have joined them, and the invasion might have been sudden.

16 These

16. These circumstances being found to be true, would be a proof that he spake by divine inspiration.

21. This was the cxxxvi psalm, which was usually sung in the temple, and on other solemn occasions.

22. Dr. Geddes has *dissention*, instead of an *ambush* in the place, and it agrees better with the history that follows. Perhaps the ambush being laid against the army of Jehosaphat, they might fall by mistake on that of their allies, and this might be called an *ambush* God laid for them,

23. It is the custom with many in the East to go to battle richly habited, and with many things of value about them. It, no doubt, shows their confidence of victory before the engagement, which will encourage their friends and confederates; but being known, it will be a motive with the enemy to attack them with vigour, in hope of a rich plunder.

Ch. XXI. 2. Here the word *Israel* must have been put inadvertently for *Judah*, by the writer or the transcriber.

3. Putting them into the possession of fortified cities would naturally excite the jealousy of the king.

4. This is the only instance of any king of Israel, or Judah, putting all his brothers to death. This has often been done by other princes in the East. This Joram was probably an idolater.

12. Here, no doubt the word *Elijah* has been put by mistake for *Elisha*, or the name of some other prophet. For Elijah had been translated many years before this time. Perhaps the word *prophet* only might

be in the original, and the name of *Elijah* added by conjecture afterwards.

13. From this it may be inferred, that his brethren were idolaters; and this might be one motive with the king for putting them to death.

15. We are not informed in what manner the king received this message, which the prophet, probably dreading his resentment, had not ventured to deliver in person. The threatening was executed in all its parts.

17. They put his sons to death Ch. 22. 1. but his wife Athaliah and her youngest son escaped. Jehoahaz is also called Ahasiah, Ch. xxii; 1, and in v. 6; Azariah.

20. The people did not wish him to live any longer; and they showed him no respect when he was dead.

Ch. XXII. 2. In 2 Kings viii. 17. and 2 Chron. xxv. 20, it is *thirty*.

She was his granddaughter.

11. Being aunt to the young king, she naturally took a greater interest in his preservation, and succession on to the kingdom.

XXIII. 2. He first secured the interest of the Levites, and principal persons in the country before he ventured upon a revolt.

16. After two idolatrous reigns this was more necessary.

Ch. XXIV. 3. It was unusual, tho' it does not appear to have been unlawful, for a high priest to have two wives; and perhaps he might not have had them both at the same time. He is never, however, called the *high-priest*, but only the *priest*, perhaps the next in authority

authority to the high-priest, and a man of great spirit and activity.

7. These sons she might have had by other men than the king. For the late king's brethren were carried captive before the death of their father.

16. This was an extraordinary instance of respect shewn to a person who had not been a king.

17. This king must have been a weak man, being first governed by Jehoiada, and on his death by persons of opposite principles.

21. This is the greatest outrage and contempt of God, and of religion, that we any where read of; and it is mentioned by our Saviour as an act of peculiar enormity.

23. This war is different from that mentioned 2 Kings xii. 17. Hazael himself was not present in it, but only his army.

25. He appears to have put to death more than one son of Jehoiada.

27. Dr. Geddes gives a translation of this verse very different from the common one.

Ch. XXV. 5. Jehosaphat had nearly four times as many, Ch. xvii.

6. *Twenty thousand.* Conj. C.

10. They would naturally consider this as a great affront.

15. This proneness to idolatry appears on all occasions, but the present is particularly remarkable, viz. that he should set up the worship of the gods that had not been able to help their former worshippers. But when an opinion is once formed, it is not easily changed.

ed. It might be thought that these gods had been able to save their worshippers, but, having been offended, did not chuse to do it.

17. He advised not with the prophet, but with some rash and inconsiderate persons.

24. The first mentioned Obededom might have had the custody of these treasures, and have been succeeded by his son in the same office.

28.—*The city of David.* A. V.

Ch. XXVI. 1. He is called Azariah in the book of Kings. When his father died he was only four years of age, so that there must have been an interregnum of twelve years.

5. This was probably the son of that Zachariah who was slain in the temple.

7. These Mehunims were a people in Arabia Deserta.

10. These were probably to defend the people against the incursions of the Arabs. This Carmel was not the famous mountain of that name, but some other *fertile spot*, as the word signifies. Several of the kings of Judah gave much attention to husbandry, and the breeding of cattle, setting a good example to their subjects.

16. Several of the Mosaic precepts, which were thought to be of less importance than others, were neglected by persons who were not of an irreligious character, especially that against sacrificing at any other than the national altar. This king might think that it became a prince to perform the part of a priest, as princes before the law had usually done; and having aggrandised himself

self by his great success in war, he would pay little regard to any remonstrances.

22. There is not in the book of Isaiah any particulars of the life of Uzziah, tho' it appears from it that he lived in his reign. He may have written some other book that is not now extant.

Ch. XXVII. 2. He followed the example of his father in the earlier part of his reign, and in his general conduct; but his not attending the service of the temple is mentioned as an exception to his excellent character in other respects. His motive for this is not mentioned, but it must have had some relation to what had happened to his father in that place.

3. He might repair and enlarge what Solomon had built. What he did at Ophel is very uncertain.

5. They had been conquered by David; but having revolted, they were subdued and rendered tributary again.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. *Twenty five years, LXX*, which is most probable; otherwise he must have had Hezekiah when he was only eleven years old.

5. This was after the invasion mentioned 2 Kings, xvi—6.

13. It appears from this that there were many in these degenerate times who respected the religion of their ancestors, and the prophets of the true God, in the ten tribes. There was uncommon generosity in their conduct on this occasion.

19. *Ahaz the king of Judah.* A. V.

This was a great change from the prosperous times of Uzziah and Jotham.

20. He rebuked the Syrians who were their common enemies, but did not help him to recover what the Philistines and his other enemies had taken from him.

23. Ahaziah worshipped the gods of the Edomites whom he had conquered. Here Ahiash, with more plausibility, worshipped the gods of the people who had distressed him.

Ch. XXII K. 6. This is the first time that the service of the temple was discontinued.

11. He makes use of this language to show his affection for the Levites.

16. It is not easy to say what this *filth*, which had been collecting in the temple, could be, that it should be carried out of the city. Perhaps the place had been employed for some idolatrous purpose.

21. In the law of Moses one bullock and one goat were required to be sacrificed for the sins of the congregation, Lev. iv, 13, 14, Num. xv, 22, &c. but after this great apostasy Hezekiah offered seven of each.

25. From this it is probable that the additions which David made to the music of the national worship was with the concurrence of these prophets, and by divine direction.

27. The singing is said to have begun when the drink offering was poured out.

31. Of the burnt offerings the person who brought them did not partake; and therefore it argued more disinterested piety to bring them rather than peace offerings.

33. These were gifts of value which went into the treasury of the temple.

Chap.

Ch. XXX. 2. The passover was regularly celebrated in the first month, but this was expired before the repairs of the temple could be completed. Rather, however, than omit the observance of this festival, he directed it to be done the month following.

5. At this time the kingdom of the ten tribes subsisted; but Hezekiah, knowing the obligation of these Israelites to observe the festivals as well as the people of Judah, generously invited them to it. This honey was probably the juice of dates, as was observed before.

6. Tiglathpileser had then carried many of them captive.

17. This killing of the passover was not so much that of the paschal lamb, as the other sacrifices which were offered during the festival.

20. It does not follow that any particular judgment had actually fallen upon the people for their neglect, and nothing of the kind is mentioned. The meaning must be that their irregularity was pardoned, and not punished. The same word is used in the same sense in Is. vi, 11, *lest they should be converted and be healed*.

23. These days were probably not kept as the passover with unleavened bread, but with every mark of joy, offering peace offerings &c.

26. Solomon had held a festival of fourteen days at the dedication of the temple. 1 Kings viii, 65.

Ch. XXXI. 1. This must have been done without any order from the king of Israel, or it might be in those parts of these tribes which had been ceded to the kings of Judah.

9. He wondered that they would remain where he found them.

11. Not that he built any new chambers, but he fitted up the former ones for their reception. They might have been applied to other uses.

14. The things that are termed *most holy* were burnt offerings, sin and trespass offerings, and the two lambs for peace offerings on the last day of the feast of tabernacles. They were sacrifices of which the offerer did not partake.

16. Tho' the levites were not qualified to serve in the temple till they were twenty years of age, they might go into it along with their parents, and partake of the sacrifice, it is said, when they were three years old. Women, it is said, were never admitted for that purpose.

19. All the priests, tho' living at the greatest distance from Jerusalem, partook of the offerings on this occasion.

Ch. XXXII. 1. This was the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

4. This was a fortress within the city.

9. This is an abridged account of what is related more at large in the book of Kings, and in that of Isaiah.

12 He would give them to understand that Hezekiah had offended God by confining his worship to one place.

Ch. XXXIII. 6. In the book of Kings mention is made of his *son* only, here of his *children*, as more than one.

11 Perhaps

11. Perhaps he was taken in a thicket where he had concealed himself. At this time Babylon was under the dominion of the king of Assyria.

12. No mention is made of the repentance of Manasseh in the book of Kings. This is said by the Jews to have been thirty three years before his death; but there is no authority in the scriptures for this or any other date of this event.

14. The fish gate is supposed to have been that at which fish was brought from Joppa.

17. I have more than once observed that even pious kings of Judah not only tolerated this custom of sacrificing on elevated places, but themselves occasionally did the same.

18. Two MSS. have *kings of Judah*.

19. Some antient versions make *Hosai* a proper name, and do not render it seer, or prophet:

24. — *And he heard him.* LXX.

Ch. XXXIV. 3. In the book of Kings nothing is said of him till the eighteenth year of his reign. Jeremiah began to prophecy in his thirteenth year.

4. These were probably images dedicated to the sun.

6. — *And in the neighbouring places.* LXX

He seems to have been possessed of the whole country, or at least the greatest part of it, after the captivity of the ten tribes.

11. It seems extraordinary that a building constructed as the temple was should want these great repairs. But probably some of the out buildings at least had been demolished, and the materials applied to other uses.

14 It

14. It is not quite certain, tho' it is very probable, that this was the very copy of the law deposited in the tabernacle by Moses himself.

Ch. XXXV. 3. It is evident from this that the ark had been removed from its place to the holy of holies : but as it was not destroyed, and probably not injured (for this is not said to have been the case) it is not easy to say with what view, or by whom, it had been removed. If it had been done in the course of repairing the house, it would have been replaced without this special order.

17. He gave them lambs for the passover, that the festival might be no expence to them.

8. Hilkiah was the high priest. The other two persons were next in authority to him.

14. The priests took no rest till the evening.

18. There was probably an account of a great passover held in the time of Samuel in some book that is now lost.

20. This was the thirteenth year after the great passover.

21. No heathen princes undertook any thing of much consequence without consulting their gods in some way or other, so as to think themselves authorized by them to proceed. He therefore warned Josiah not to interfere with him.

22—*But strengthened himself.* LXX.

He had, no doubt, made a league with the enemy of the king of Egypt, and thought himself under an obligation to oppose his passage.

25 This

23. This was what we should call a collection of elegies, poetical compositions in a mournful strain, in which the lamentation over Josiah was the principal.

Ch. XXXVI: 6. He did not actually carry him away, tho' he had bound him with that view; or if he had, he was restored again.

8. Having revolted, he was reduced by the neighbouring nations, then subject to the Chaldeans, taken prisoner, and dying, or being put to death, without the gates of Jerusalem, he was buried in some private manner, without the usual solemnities.

9. Several of the ancient versions have XVIII, in agreement with 2 Kings, xxiv. 8.

10—*His father's brother.* LXX.

20. This book could not have been completed till after the return from the Babylonish captivity, probably by Ezra.

21. It is probable that the sabbatical year of rest for the land had been greatly neglected in all the idolatrous reigns, and perhaps not strictly observed in some of the others: If seventy of these years had been omitted (tho' there is no occasion to compute with so much exactness) this neglect had begun in the time of David, which is not probable. Perhaps reckoning all the neglects from the time of Joshua they might amount to seventy.

22. These two verses are evidently the beginning of the book of Ezra, which generally comes next to this in the order of the canon, and must have been copied from it before the writer was aware of the mistake, and after

after this he did not chuse to erase what he had written. This copy, being in other respects of authority, has been followed in all subsequent copies, and all the antient versions. This circumstance affords a proof of the scrupulous exactness with which the copies of the canonical books were afterwards taken. No writer or translator, would take upon him to correct even a manifest error. How then can we think that any other alteration, diminution, or addition, would be voluntarily made by any of the Jewish nation, or not have been detected if it had been attempted by any person.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

E Z R A.

THIS book was evidently written by persons who were themselves present at the transactions recorded in it, the narrative being in the first person. It also bears upon the face of it every character of natural simplicity, and contains more particulars of time, persons, and places, than could have been introduced by any other. But as the writer of the first six chapters was at Jerusalem in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, and that

that of the last four in that of Artaxerxes Longimanus, at the distance of sixty years, it is not probable that they were the same person. The latter was, no doubt, Ezra, and as he describes himself so particularly at the beginning of the seventh chapter, it is the more probable that what he wrote begins at that place, and that he copied the preceding part from some earlier writer.

Ch. I. 1. That a person of the name of *Cyrus* was to deliver the Jews from their captivity, was foretold by *Isaiah*, Ch. XLIV and XLV, long before *Cyrus* was born, and probably even, while the Babylonians, who carried the Jews captive, were themselves subject to the Assyrians; and it was now verified, as it had been foretold by *Jeremiah*, seventy years after the captivity in the reign of *Jehoiakim*.

2. This decree of *Cyrus* was probably made in consequence of *Daniel* (who was in great favour with him) shewing him the prophecies of *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*; and *Daniel* himself might draw the form of it; tho' two decrees of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and one of *Darius* the Mede, contain the same sentiments; acknowledging the supremacy of the God of the Jews, as did *Hiram* king of Tyre in his letter to *Solomon*, and other heathens on various occasions; and this was not inconsistent with their worshipping inferior deities. *Cyrus* here ascribes all power in heaven and earth to the God of the Jews, that it was from him that he received his empire, and that it was his will that he should restore the Jews, and rebuild the temple.

4. This was exhorting all his subjects to give every
assistance

assistance in their power to the Jews; and indeed all the Israelites; wherever they were dispersed through his extensive empire; which comprehended Assyria and Media, whither the ten tribes had been carried captive. He did not doubt but that the richer Jews would contribute largely to the work.

7. These vessels had not been applied to any common use, but had been deposited in some temple tho' Belshazzar had ordered them to be produced at his profane banquet.

8. Sheshbazzar is only another name for Zerubbabel, the prince of the Jews; as appears from Ch. iii, 28, v. 14, 16. Daniel and many other persons had new names given to them.

11. The vessels enumerated were only two thousand four hundred and ninety nine. But these might be those of a larger size. We find no such apparatus for the use of any heathen temple; and this circumstance must have struck the heathens of those times with great respect.

Ch. II. 1. This province was that which is called Ch. v, 8, the *province of Judæa*; for it was now a province of the Persian empire. Had Ezra been of this number, his name; would, no doubt, have been inserted. Zerubbabel, whose name stands the first in this catalogue, was the governor, and Jeshua was the high priest. This Mordecai must have been a different person from the Mordecai in the book of Esther.

3 This is an account of the number of persons descended from some noted ancestor, who either actually returned, or gave their names as ready to return. There
is

is another catalogue of them in the 7th chapter of Nehemiah ; but the names and numbers are sometimes different. Since, however, they are in general arranged in the same order, they were, no doubt, originally the same, as copied with some variations from the same original.

20. In Neh. vii, 25, it is Gibeon. They were probably from that city; and this may be the case with respect to other names that occur in this catalogue, being those of places, and not of men. Some of them are evidently so.

35. All that have been hitherto enumerated were of the tribes of Judah or Benjamin.

36. Jedaiah is mentioned 1 Chron. xxiv, 7, as a principal person among the priests.

43. The number under each of these names is not mentioned ; but the sum total is given v. 58.

55. These were probably persons of different nations, who had been employed by Solomon in the building of the temple, and his other works, whose descendants continued in the country on the same terms with the Nethenims, with whom they are classed, v. 58. That they did not dislike their situation is evident from the number of them that returned to it. They were more than the Levites and the singers.

59. These might be of the ten tribes who had been so long from their own country that they could not give a distinct account of their descent.

62. The priests were more particularly careful to preserve their genealogies, as they were intitled to peculiar distinction. But many of them must have

been lost when Jerusalem was taken and burned, and they were hurried away in much confusion to a distant country. There were also some women whom the priests were not allowed to marry, and their offspring were accounted impure. All these were now rejected from the rank of priests, and probably classed with the Levites.

63. This Tirshatha was probably the same with Zerubbabel, the Jewish governor under the king of Persia; since Nehemiah had afterwards the same title. Ch. viii. 9. x, 1. He gave sentence that all those who could not clearly prove their descent from Aaron should be excluded from the priesthood, till some one should arise who should be authorized by God to decide in the case. From this it is evident that there was no such oracle to have recourse to at this time. Indeed, we do not find any answer given by urim and thummim, or in the presence of the high-priest clothed with the Ephod, after the time of David. A divine interposition of this kind will be absolutely necessary at the return of the Jews from their present dispersion; their genealogies being now much more uncertain. And yet, according to Ezekiel, not only the priests, but the descendants of all the tribes will be distinguished, and separate portions of the country assigned them.

64. This was a small number compared with that of those who remained dispersed in different parts of the Persian empire, tho' they were more than were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar. The amount of all the preceding numbers is also more than twenty nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; but the
rest

rest were probably a mixed multitude of other tribes, and of those who could not prove their descent.

65. It appears from this, and as some think from 1 Chron. xxv. 5. 6. that women as well as men were employed as singers in the temple.

67. It is evident from these circumstances, that the generality of those who returned were of the poorer sort. They who were at their ease, tho' in a foreign country, would be more inclined to continue where they were.

70. There were probably some of all the twelve tribes present; and it appears from Ch. vi, 17, 18, that they offered twelve he goats at the dedication of the temple.

Ch. III. 1. It appears from Ch. vii, 9, that the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem took them four months. They probably, therefore, set out in the spring; and so the feast of tabernacles, which is in the seventh month, would be the first that they could assemble to celebrate.

3. The first thing necessary to be done was the erecting of the altar. For after this the daily sacrifices, which was the most essential part of the national religion, might commence. This, therefore, they immediately set about, notwithstanding their apprehension of disturbance from the neighbouring nations. It was probably erected on the situation of the former altar; since the new temple stood in the same place with the old one, and the foundation of the Eastern wall, built by Solomon from the bottom of the valley that separated it from the mount of Olives, existed in the time of Josephus, who gives a particular description of it.

4. As there was no temple, nor, as far as appears, any tabernacle, erected, they could not regularly observe the day of expiation, which required the high-priest to go into the holy of holies.

10. They had not probably at this time any other instruments than cymbals.

11. They sung the psalm which has this response, and in this probably all the people joined.

12. The old people perceived that this new temple would never equal the magnificence of the old one, and therefore lamented ; while the young people rejoiced in the prospect of their erecting such a structure as they were able to do. What then will be the joy of the nation at the erection of the temple described by Ezekiel, which in richness and magnificence will far exceed that of Solomon.

Ch. IV. 2. These were the Samaritans, and I, do not see any thing apparently unreasonable in their request. Some of these people were certainly of Hebrew extraction, and they all professed to worship the same God with the Jews, and wished to do it in the same manner, and at the same place. Indeed, there is no evidence that at this, or in any future time, any of them were idolaters, any more than the Jews themselves. But whether the Jews acted properly or not in this business, their conduct has answered the most excellent purpose in the plan of divine providence. For as from this time the Jews had no *dealings with the Samaritans*, but were perpetually at variance with them, and they had separate places of worship, the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch must have been that which they were

were then possessed of, and therefore that which they had from the time of Josiah. And tho' it differs in nothing that is essential from that of the Jews, the variations are so many, that it is evident from the most cursory inspection that it was not taken from any Jewish copy since the Babylonish captivity, and which christians have received from them.

3. They certainly were not in general of the same nation with themselves; but many persons of other nations, even of the seven devoted ones, had been incorporated with the Hebrews. If there was any thing insidious in the proposal, it does not appear.

5. This was certainly unjustifiable; but it was the natural effect of resentment for the indignity that was offered them. It is not said what they alleged to cause this obstruction; but it was probably the same that they had urged before, viz. that the Jews were a people who were very likely to revolt, and endeavour to become independent.

6. This Ahasuerus was probably Cambyfes, as he followed Cyrus, and preceded Darius Hystaspis, in whose reign the temple was actually built.

7. If this was a person different from Ahasuerus, as is most probable, it must have been Smerdis the Magian, tho' he reigned only seven months. Along with this letter of general complaint, they probably sent a more particular account of their reasons for writing it.

9. These were people who had been removed from their native countries to Samaria, or to places in that neighbourhood.

14. The writer was an officer under the government.

16. There was, no doubt, much plausibility in this. The Jews had been a considerable nation, and therefore might become so again.

19. It appears from this that records were preserved in the Persian court, not only of transactions within the country, but of those of neighbouring nations, by which they could judge of their conduct in any preceding time.

23. There cannot be any reasonable doubt of this being Darius Hystaspis, whose second year was the eighteenth from the first of Cyrus. On the supposition of its being Darius Nothus, both Zerubbabel the governor, and Jeshua the high priest, must have lived, and have retained their offices and power, to the age of one hundred and eighty years. And tho' this might be admitted with respect to a single person, that it should be the case of two persons acting together in a public capacity is altogether incredible.

Ch. V. 1. He must have been the grandson of Iddo ; for his father's name was Berachiah.

3. These were persons in authority under the king of Persia, but more reasonable than Rehum and his associates.

4. In the LXX, and other ancient versions it is *they say*, which makes a more consistent sense. They naturally inquired both by what authority they were building, and who they were that superintended the work. That this was part of their address is evident from v. 10.

16. They never intirely ceased to build, tho' they did not do much, so as to draw any great degree of attention to them, till this time.

17 Nothing

17. Nothing can be reasonably objected to the conduct of these governors. They made proper inquiries, they made a fair report of the answer, and only wished to know whether what the Jews alleged was true.

Ch. VI. 2. Achmetha is supposed to have been Ecabata, the residence of the kings of Media.

3. It was properly the length of the building that was sixty cubits. They had leave to make it of these dimensions, tho' they exceeded those of the temple of Solomon. But Josephus says that this second temple was not so high as the former by sixty cubits.

8. In addition to the favour shewn them by Cyrus, he ordered that they should be assisted out of his own revenue in those countries.

9. This was a provision for the expence of the morning and evening sacrifices; and he had been rightly informed concerning what was requisite for that purpose.

10. Here it appears that each person's sacrifice was accompanied with a prayer, and also that sacrifices and prayers were frequently presented in the name of heathens. This was, no doubt, an acknowledgment of the power of the God of Israel, whatever they might think of that of other deities.

12. Whatever might be Darius's own practice, he could not have used this language if he had not believed in the great power of the God of the Jews, a power of destroying all kings and all people.

14. It was completed before the accession of the successor of Darius, who was Xerxes; and this prince might add to the ornaments of the temple. The next king

king of Persia, Artaxerxes Longimanus, shewed the Jews great favour, as we shall see. As Darius reigned thitty six years, the temple was finished thirty years before his death.

17. The dedication of a place of worship consisted in nothing but the application of it to its intended use. The number of sacrifices was greatly short of that of Solomon on a similar occasion. But that of a hundred cattle, or a *hecatomb*, was always considered by the heathens as a very magnificent offering, and was seldom exceeded. Tho' not many of the ten tribes returned, they considered themselves as representing the whole of the nation, and called themselves *the twelve tribes*.

21. As it is evident from this that they admitted proselytes from heathen nations, I see no reason why they might not have admitted the Samaritans to join them.

22. The king of Persia is here called the king of *Assyria*, as the kings of Babylon sometimes were. The three empires of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, were nearly the same, tho' the metropolis was changed. However, in the Arabic version it is *the king of Persia*.

Ch. VII. 1. From this place it is evident that Ezra was the writer ; and as mention is made of the thirty second year of this king, Neh. v, 14, xiii, 6, it could not be Xerxes, but probably his successor Artaxerxes Longimanus, who reigned thirty nine years, Ezra was probably the grandson of Seraiah, who perished when Jerusalem was taken.

3. Between Azariah and Meraiah six generations are omitted. They may be found in 1 Chron. vi, 6.

6 Scribes

6. Scribes were persons skilled in the law, and generally teachers of it; as they were in the time of our Saviour. What power the king gave him appears in the letter which he carried with him, a copy of which is given, v. 12, &c.

7. This was a second company, who returned after they had heard that the temple was built.

12. The *God of Heaven* was the character that designated the God of the Hebrews in the decrees of Cyrus and Darius, and the same was adopted by Artaxerxes.

14. He was authorized to enforce the laws of Moses, and to exact the penalties enjoined in that law, in case of the transgression of them; so that the Jews were exempted from all foreign jurisdiction.

15. Both the king and his chief officers added to what had been given before for the use of the temple.

23. From this it is evident that the king had a real dread of the power of the God of the Jews.

24. This was a privilege not granted by any former king.

26. That is, the laws of the Jews are now enforced by the royal authority.

Ch. VIII. 2. By *sons* in this place are evidently to be understood descendants in general.

10. *Of the sons of Baani, Shelomith.* LXX.

13. The *last sons* probably means those of the family who went at this time; the former being those who went in the time of Zerubbabel.

15. This was some river that runs into the Euphrates. They were all priests, and not merely Levites.

17 There

17. There was a city called *Caspi* in Parthia, perhaps the same with this. Iddo seems to have been a Levite, who conducted some kind of public worship among the Jews with whom he resided, perhaps the same with the synagogue worship, which probably came into general use at this time.

26. The *six hundred* is the number of vessels. The number denoting the weight is wanting. CONJ. Ho.

Every one of them was a talent.

27. This must have been some mixed metal, of more value than mere copper, perhaps *brass*, which would bear a fine polish; and the manufacture of it being then difficult, it might bear a great price.

36. It is impossible to read this account without being struck with the most unquestionable marks of genuineness in it. None but a person actually present at the transactions could have written in this manner, and have mentioned so many particulars.

Ch. IX. 3. As there was no prohibition of marriage with women of any nation that became proselytes, such as that of Boaz with Ruth, and of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, these must have been marriages contracted without any regard to that circumstance; and therefore there was great danger of the introduction of idolatry among them by this means; and from this time the most effectual measures were taken to prevent what they were now thoroughly sensible had been the cause of all their late calamities.

8. This is an allusion to the large nails, or pins, by which tents are fastened to the ground; and therefore the

the meaning is, that they had now obtained a firm settlement in the country.

14. Such had been the forbearance of God towards them, that there ought to have been nothing impure left among them.

Ch. X. 4. He had a knowledge of the law, and authority from the king of Persia to correct all abuses.

9. It was about three months after the arrival of Ezra.

26. Jehiel was Shechaniah's father, and yet he was not favoured by his son, who was one that superintended this business.

44. As no mention is made of putting away any children, it may be concluded that they were circumcised and retained; tho' the women, not chusing to become profelytes, were dismissed.

NOTES.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

N E H E M I A H.

THAT Nehemiah, whose name this book bears, and who was cup bearer to Artaxerxes Longimanus, was the author of it, there cannot be any reasonable doubt; the whole of it being written in his name, and, what had not been common, it is written in the first person. He arrived at Jerusalem thirteen years after Ezra, with the rank of governor of the province, with authority to forward the building of the wall, and in every other way to promote the welfare of his country.

Ch. I. 1. The month of Chisleu answers to part of November and December. It was the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. Ezra had arrived in the seventh year of the same king, Ez. vii, 7. Shushan was the Susa of the Greeks, where the kings of Persia resided in the winter.

3. The walls remained in the same state in which the Chaldeans left them after burning the city.

11. He meant the king, of whom he had a request to make in favour of his country.

Ch.

Ch. II. 4. He prayed silently that the king might give him a favourable hearing.

6. It does not appear to have been usual for the queen to be seen by any stranger. But perhaps he was an eunuch, and such usually attended on the women of the palace, and were their guards. It was probably a short time that he fixed, not much more than a year, which made him hasten the building of the wall. After this he came as governor of the province for twelve years.

8. This might be Lebanon from which he might want timber. The buildings that were wanted were those that adjoined to the temple, which was all that had hitherto been erected. It also required to be surrounded with a strong wall and gates. It is called a *palace* as being a magnificent structure. There was also wanting a proper house for the governor.

10. Horonaim was a city of note in the land of Moab, from which this Sanballat might have his appellation of Horonite. Tobiah, being called a *servant*, was probably an officer under the king. From this it appears that the Moabites and Ammonites had been restored to their country, as well as the Jews, if they had been removed from it ; but this does not appear to have been the case. Both these nations, as well as the Edomites, were afterwards conquered by the Maccabees.

13. These two gates probably led to the valley through which the brook Kedron ran.

14. This was probably on the West side of the city, near the fountain of Siloe, or Gihon. The king's pool
was

was probably that which had been made by Hezekiah, who changed the course of the water, and might make a reservoir for it.

15. This was the brook Kedron.

19. Gesham may have been the king's deputy in some part of Arabia, or an Arab chief independent of the king of Persia, but in friendship with some of his officers.

Ch. III. 1. Eliashib was the grandson of Jeshua; The sheep gate is supposed to have been on the South side of the city, through which the sheep that were to be sacrificed were brought; and on this account the priests might undertake to build it, and when they had done to pronounce a solemn benediction upon it. Religious ceremonies were common in heathen nations at the building of cities and public structures. What is here rendered *Meah*, which signifies *a hundred*, is very variously translated in the antient versions.

5. The reason of this neglect is not mentioned. Perhaps the meaning may be, that the chiefs could not make them (the common people) submit to the work that was enjoined them.

6. This is supposed to have been gate of the old city as built by the Jebusites.

7. The rendering of the latter part of this verse is very uncertain. It is not probable that the Persian governor to the West of the Euphrates resided in Jerusalem. He might, however, have a house appropriated to his use when he visited the place.

13. This is the valley through which ran the brook Kedron, between the city, and the mount of Olives.

16 This

16. This was probably made by Hezekiah, mentioned 2 Kings, xx, 20. The *house of the mighty* may mean the guard house: But this is very uncertain.

26. It appears from this that the Nethenims lived all together in this tower, or citadel, of Ophel.

32. It was justly deemed very meritorious to exert themselves, as these people did, to repair the walls of their metropolis; and therefore Nehemiah took care to have what each company did left upon record; and none but a person present at the work, and particularly attentive to it, would have described it in this manner. These are most unquestionable marks of authenticity: To us, however, who are not acquainted with the city, much of the description is necessarily unintelligible.

Ch. IV. 2. He thought it absolutely impossible that they should accomplish what they had undertaken.

3. Jackals are common in this country, and roam about houses and walls chiefly in the night.

5. This is the language of strong resentment, and perhaps not justifiable according to the spirit of the gospel, which teaches us not to render evil for evil, but to return blessing for cursing.

6. They had raised it from the foundation to half of its intended height.

7. Some of these people had not been mentioned before, but were now probably drawn by Sanballat into the confederacy against the Jews.

12. *From all places where they dwell they will advance against us.* CONJ. C.

They had frequent information, from Jews in the neighbourhood

neighbourhood of their enemies, of their designs against them.

16. These were the proper attendants of Nehemiah. They had the charge of such weapons as those who were employed in building could not carry themselves. Their swords, being girded to their sides, did not hinder their working. Other persons also stood near the workmen to encourage them.

23. *Every one went with his weapon for water. M. or every man his weapon in his right hand.* CONJ. C.

We see here how much the zeal of one man may accomplish. Nehemiah found the city in ruins, and without any defence ; but in a short time he excited all the people to exert themselves, and in spite of much opposition, and a state of constant alarm, it was completed.

Ch. V. 1. Tho' the Jews were cured of their addictedness to idolatry in the Babylonish captivity, they were by no means become in other respects a virtuous nation. It appears that the rich had taken an undue advantage of the poor, to purchase, no doubt, at a low price, the little property they were possessed of ; and by lending them money at a high interest had reduced them to a state of servitude. This was a great subject of complaint in the early periods of the Roman history, and occasioned serious convulsions in their state. But the Jews had excellent laws to prevent this, which the Romans had not ; Nehemiah enforced those laws, and set a noble example in doing more for the poor than the law required. We find no such character among the Romans.

2 We

2. *We give our sons and daughters in pledge.* CONJ. Ho.

3. Having numerous families, they had been obliged to mortgage their property for a subsistence.

5. This was a most pathetic expostulation. They and their children were naturally of equal value with their richer brethren ; and yet the one were masters, and the other slaves.

7. He excited the indignation of the people in general against these oppressors ; so that they were probably afraid to proceed as they had begun.

8. He and his friends had expended their money to redeem their brethren from the heathens ; and yet these richer Jews were so far from acting in the same generous manner, that they had contrived to reduce them to slavery to themselves. Must I, says he, redeem them a second time from you, as I have done from their heathen masters.

11. A hundredth part, paid monthly, which is more than 12 per cent. per annum, was the usual interest of money in antient times.

14. He received no salary as governor, but lived on the produce of his own estate, and perhaps his allowance as cup bearer to the king of Persia, in which situation he had probably received many presents, and had become rich.

15. Other governors had not only exacted of the people more than their regular salaries, but had connived at the exactions of those who were under them.

16. He did not take the advantage that others had

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done

done of the wants of the poor, who had been ready to sell their estates for small sums of money.

18. The salary of the governor had been paid by a tax on the people. This he remitted to them.

19. There is something very pleasing in this natural expression of his wish of a reward from God for what he had done for his people, tho' it may have the appearance of being mercenary. But to do good without the expectation of any reward, here or hereafter, tho' it may be attained by a confirmed habit and practice of virtue, as other disinterested pursuits are; is not to be proposed to mankind in the first instance. It even requires great comprehension of mind, and a strong sense of piety and virtue, to look for a reward beyond the grave. Our Saviour himself prayed for the glory that was destined for him in the eternal councils of God; and *for the joy that was set before him endured the cross*. We see in this history of Nehemiah the great influence of an example of generosity on other persons.

Ch. VI. 2. Ono was in the tribe of Benjamin, Ch. xi, 35, 2 Chron. viii, 12.

5. In the East letters of respect are always sent in bags, or purses, of value. To send a letter without any covering of this kind, as in this case, implied contempt.

10. He was one of those who had the character of a prophet, but was in the interest of Sanballat, and pretended fear, as if to express by significant actions that there was just cause of fear for Nehemiah. This he did with a view to discourage him.

14. The

14. The conduct of persons falsely pretending to prophecy in the name of God is not a little extraordinary. They must have arrived at a great degree of impiety:

15. There are in history other instances of equal expedition in accomplishing great works, when many hands, and great zeal, have been employed about them.

17. Many Jews of note were in the interest of Sanballat, whose daughter had married into the family of a priest.

19. *Moreover his words they repeated before me, and my words they carried to him.* CONJ. C.

Ch. VII. 2. He was the person who had come from Jerusalem to Shushan, and had informed Nehemiah of the state of the city and country. The palace was the residence of Nehemiah as governor, and this Hananiah was the principal steward.

5. This he probably did that those who belonged to the city might be induced to reside there for its better defence.

6. This was a copy of the same catalogue that we have in the second chapter of the book of Ezra, but with some variations. That in Ezra seems to have been taken in Babylon, and this at Jerusalem; and on this account the numbers of the particulars are sometimes greater in this, tho' the sum total is the same; the particulars having been corrected by subsequent accounts, without comparing them with the sum total.

10. In Ezra ii, 5, it is *seven hundred and seventy five*. There are many other differences between the accounts

in this chapter and the corresponding one in Ezra, but they only relate to names and numbers.

72. This is a more detailed account than that given by Ezra, and the differences are in some respects considerable to have been copied from the same original.

Ch. VIII. 1. In this seventh month was the first great festival that occurred after the building of the wall. This festival is mentioned Ch. iii, 26: It was, no doubt, very spacious, so as to contain more people than the court of the temple. Ezra, not having been mentioned before, is thought to have been absent since his first arrival, but to have returned at this time. This was the festival at which the law was appointed to be read to the people every seventh year.

2. This was beginning earlier than the law required.

4. It was a stage, on which several persons might stand, probably like the pulpits in the Jewish synagogues.

7. They, no doubt, explained in the vulgar dialect what was first read in pure Hebrew. In v. 3, it is said that Ezra read to *all that could understand*. Now there could not be any difficulty in understanding the law, provided they understood the language in which it was read to them. And it is certain that after the return from Babylon, the popular language of the Jews was much changed, and more nearly resembled the Chaldee; at the same time it was not in such a state as to induce the prophets Haggai, Zachariah, or Malachi, to write in it. But in all similar cases of the corruption of languages, persons do not usually write in it till it has acquired a fixed and reputable character, in consequence

quence of being spoken by people of condition. The better educated Jews, no doubt, were capable of conversing, as well as of writing, in pure Hebrew ; and they would either write in this, or in pure Chaldee. Thus both the languages are found in great purity in the books of Daniel and of Ezra, and not the dialect spoken by the common people.

9. They were naturally much affected at this solemn reading of the law, after it had been so much neglected.

14. They would, no doubt, read to the people the manner of observing the particular festival which they were about to celebrate.

17. The more pious kings of Judah had neglected several of the ceremonials of their religion, even the general observance of the passover. For otherwise such notice would not have been taken of the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah ; and the living in booths at the feast of tabernacles had perhaps been neglected altogether. It is certain they had frequently sacrificed at other altars than the great national one in the tabernacle, tho' this was expressly forbidden in the law. Perhaps, however, all that we can infer from this circumstance is, not that this rite had been intirely neglected, but that before this time it had not been so generally celebrated, or with so much festivity as on this occasion.

Ch. IX. 1. They did not return to their mourning till after the twenty third day ; because this day was from the present time observed as a festival, on account of their having finished the reading of the law. It was,

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there

therefore, called *the festival of the law*, and was observed with joy like other festivals.

2. Tho' this had been done by many persons before this time, it appears not to have been done universally, but was now made at least more general.

5. This begins a most pathetic summary of all the dealings of God with the Israelitish nation, which shews that their preceding history was well known to them, and that they had a just sense of the iniquity of their fathers.

22. The corner of a sofa is the place of honour in the East, and here is thought to be an allusion to it; the Divine Being having distinguished his people by giving them the most honourable places.

37. They paid a heavy tribute to the kings of Persia.

38. They renewed their covenant with God, and promised to observe it better than before, in hopes that, in his due time, he would shew them more favour. To make the engagement more solemn, a writing was drawn up, expressing this, and they set their names and seals to it; a thing that had never been done before.

Ch. X. 1. Nehemiah, the governor, set the example of signing and sealing. The name of Ezra not being found in this place among those of the priests who signed the writing, has excited much surprize. But he might have been absent at the time; and an inventor of the history would not have omitted his name.

29. They who did not sign the writing laid themselves under the same obligation by words.

§1. The more burthenfome obligations of the law
are

are here particularly mentioned as those to which the greatest objections might have been made.

34. From this arose a kind of festival mentioned by Josephus, in which wood was carried to the temple with great joy on the 22d of Abib.

Ch. XI. 1. The people coming from a state of captivity, and being in general poor, many of them would find it difficult to subsist, except by the culture of their lands; so that only the richer sort could conveniently live in the city, which however, as their metropolis, and the place of their national worship, required to be inhabited and defended. A competent number of inhabitants, therefore, were settled there by lot.

3. Israel in this place must signify the common people of all the tribes, as distinguished from the priests, and the classes that are recited immediately after them.

4. The children of Perez means the descendants of Perez, the son of Judah. If these names be compared with those of the persons who came from Babylon with Zerubbabel, recited in the next chapter, it will be found that they were in the fourth and fifth generations from them, which is thought to be an argument in favour of the Artaxerxes in this book being not Longimanus, but Mnemon. But many of the names in this chapter must have been inserted even after the time of Nehemiah.

23. This must have been the king of Persia, who directed a particular allowance to be made to these singers, tho' for what reason it is not easy to say.

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24. He probably decided in all causes between the king of Persia and the people, as in those relating to the revenue.

36. In 1 Chron. ix, 3, it is said that some of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasse dwelt at this time in Jerusalem.

Ch. XII. 1. This is an account of the priests and Levites from before the time of Nehemiah, going back as far as the return under Zerubbabel, and therefore must have been filled up by those who copied it afterwards. This could not have been the Ezra who was cotemporary with Nehemiah. The difference in the names in this catalogue, and some others, is hardly worth notice; as it was no uncommon thing for the same person to have more names than one. The radicals also are sometimes the same when in other respects they are very different. All that we can infer from such differences as these, is that the catalogues were not copied from the same but from different originals, which, however were materially the same.

11. Jaddua was high priest in the time of Alexander the Great, and nothing later than this is mentioned in any book of the Old Testament.

12. Having given an account of the chief of the priests in the time of Joshua, he now does the same of those who officiated in the high-priesthood of his son Joiakim.

22. This was probably the Darius who was conquered by Alexander.

23. *Jonathan the son of Jehoiada, the son of Eliahish.* CONJ. NO.

As

As there had been registers of the Levites in the public records from Joshua to Johanan, some think this refers to 1 Chron. ix, 14, &c.

24. That is, serving in their turns.

30. This must have been by sprinkling them with water, as emblematical of purification. For this was an idea familiar to the Jews, and therefore no surprise was expressed at the baptism of John, or of Jesus.

40.—*Went to the left.* Conj. Ho. to correspond to those who went to the right, v. 31.

Having first met in one place, they divided themselves into two companies, one with Nehemiah, and the other with other persons; and having made a progress round the city, with hymns and music, they all met at the temple, where the two choirs joined.

44. Both the singers and the porters performed their respective duties; the former singing in their courses, and the other keeping unclean persons from the place.

45. It is probable from this, that all, or most of the hymns that were sung in the temple were composed in the time of David, as his regulations with respect to the singing were enforced by Solomon.

47. The people gave their tythes to the Levites, and the Levites gave theirs to the priests. The tythe is called *holy* because it was appropriated to a pious use, according to the ordinance of God.

Ch. XIII. 1. This could not be, as we should naturally conclude, on the day of the dedication mentioned in the preceding chapter, but after his return from Persia, whither he had been to wait on the king, v. 6. He had left every thing in the most promising state

state, but now many abuses were introduced. He left the Levites well provided for, but now found them much neglected, v. 10, and there were other irregularities to correct.

Notwithstanding this exclusion of the Moabites and Ammonites from the congregation of Israel, marriages, as I have observed, had been made with them without any notice having been taken of their being irregular. Ruth, from whom David was descended, was a Moabitess; and at this time it is not probable that women from those countries refused to conform to the Jewish religion. But before this time examples of such marriages had been rare, so as to have been attended with no inconvenience; whereas now they appear to have been very numerous, so that if no check had been put to it, there would have been a great confusion of the different nations, and the Jews would have been no more Jews than the Samaritans were Israelites. It was on this account perhaps thought necessary to enforce the laws of Moses with greater rigour.

4. *Eliashib the priest gave Tobiah a place in the courts of the house of God.* CONJ. HO.

This was probably the high priest mentioned Ch. iii, 1. His grandson called by Josephus Manasseh, had married the daughter of Sanballat, called a Horonite, the friend of Tobiah, and the great enemy of the Jews.

5. This was a shocking abuse, and so soon after the dedication of the new temple, and the appropriation of the chambers of it to religious uses, it is most extraordinary

dinary that any thing of the kind should have been tolerated. Several of the rooms had probably been made into one for the better accommodation of this Ammonite.

14. He naturally hoped that this exemplary zeal would not go unrewarded, and he will not be disappointed.

15. It is remarkable, that tho' these great abuses prevailed so much at this time, they were more than corrected in the time of our Saviour. Their attention to the Sabbath was then become superstitious, tho' they were more degenerate in other respects:

22. He thought he could depend upon the Levites, as well as upon his own servants, who might be wanted elsewhere.

23. This had been done notwithstanding the correction of the same abuse before.

25. He denounced the curses of God on such violations of his law. The plucking off of hair, and especially that of the beard, was always considered as the greatest indignity, and consequently it was a severe punishment in the East.

28. Eliashib probably died before Nehemiah's return from Persia, and his son Joiada had succeeded him. It was a son of this Joiada, called by Josephus Manasseh, that had married the daughter of Sanballat. For this he was probably not only disqualified for being highpriest, but banished from the country by Nehemiah.

31. He again enforced the regulations that had been
been

been made before his return . . . Persia, Ch. x, 34. He concludes with the same pious prayer that he had more than once used before. This natural language of a pious heart is an abundant proof of the genuineness of the book, and consequently of the truth of the facts recorded in it. And if these be true, there unquestionably existed a *law of Moses*, that was respected as authentic by the Jewish nation, tho' in many respects so much disliked that it was little observed till enforced by this pious governor, and others. And they had no personal interest to serve by it, but would have been much more popular if they had connived at the abuses. But they looked for their reward not from the people, or in this world, but from God alone in another.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

E S T H E R.

THE writer of this book is not known, but having always been received by the Jews as an authentic history, and an annual custom having been observed in commemoration of the transactions recorded in it, from the time that they took place, there cannot be any reasonable doubt of their truth. The transactions relate to the time of one of the kings of Persia, probably of Artaxerxes Longimanus, the same that reigned in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Ch. I. 2. To this place, which was situated in Persia called *Susa* by the Greeks, Cyrus removed the seat of empire from Babylon.

4. By the king's *servants* are to be understood officers employed by him in the affairs of government, distinct from the princes, who had no public employment. The occasion of this feast is not mentioned. But it could not have been an annual festival on any account, since it continued six months.

6. It is only in open courts, surrounded by buildings, that any great number of people can be assembled.

bled at any house in the East ; and as the direct rays of the sun would render such a situation very uncomfortable, it is customary to have hangings which can be extended over the whole area, fastened to the pillars which surround it.

8. It appears from the history of Alexander, that it was the custom in Persia to encourage hard drinking. To restrain this excess, and to preserve decorum, the king on this occasion made a rule to prevent it.

12. It is reckoned very indecent in all the Eastern countries for any woman of condition to be seen by any person besides her husband and the family ; tho' we meet with other instances in history of foolish husbands boasting of the beauty of their wives, and producing them before their friends.

13. *Knowing the times* must mean being acquainted with the custom of former times, and with what other persons had done in similar cases.

14. Mention is made of *seven counsellors* of the king of Persia in Ezra, vii, 14. Few persons were admitted into the presence of these kings, who expected to be more revered on that account.

18. *And from this day will the ladies of Persia and Media, who have heard of the transaction of the queen, speak to the princes of the king (i. e. their husbands) with too much contempt and heat, or petulance.* LXX. CONJ. Ho.

19. It appears from the history of Daniel, that the laws of the Medes and Persians were never changed, and that even particular decrees, or orders of the court, were never revoked. This must have been intended

to

to impress the minds of the people with an idea of the great wisdom of the court, as if all the laws and orders had been so well considered, and were so just and reasonable; that no alteration could be necessary. But the Persian wives would only laugh at this decree of their own husbands, and would admire, and probably imitate, the spirit of Vashti.

22. It is not probable that a decree made in this manner, in the height of resentment, inflamed by drinking, would make any permanent change in the manners of a nation. To make men masters in their own houses cannot be effected by the decrees of any court, but by the spirit and good sense of the husbands, and the willing submission of the wives. There was something hazardous in this advice, as it was probable that the king would repent of so rash a resolution against a wife whom he admired, and who had shewn such a spirit as might make him admire her still more.

Ch. II. 1. No doubt he repented of his hasty decree, and therefore the courtiers took the following measure to remedy, in the best manner that they could, what was impossible to undo.

3. Hegai was no doubt an eunuch; for such are to this day the guards of women in the eastern harems.

6. Some ancestor of Mordecai had been carried captive at this time.

11. Mordecai had probably some office about the court. For all that were carried captive at the same time with his ancestor were persons of condition, 2 Kings, xxiv, 14. Dan. i, 4.

12. We cannot easily form an idea of the use of such

such a long course of purification. But the luxury and delicacy of persons of high rank in the East, exceeds any thing that was ever known in the West.

13. She had whatever she fancied could set her person off to advantage.

15. She, knowing him to be her friend, and a person of experience, was directed by him in every thing.

16. She seems to have had some distinction from the first; having apartments in the king's *royal house*, whereas the rest were in the second house of the women, under the custody of the chamberlains, tho' it was a long time before she was advanced to the dignity of queen.

17. She became his principal wife or queen, while the rest remained in the condition of concubines, or wives of a secondary order, no person being allowed to marry any of them.

18. As a mark of his favour, he remitted some of their taxes, and made presents to the grandees of the nation.

19. There had probably been a collection of young women when Vashti was made queen, and this being the first, that at which Esther was chosen was the second; and at this time, as well as afterwards, Mordecai had some office which required his attendance at the gate of the palace.

21. Mordecai's station, being at the gate, might give him a good opportunity of discovering a plot against the life of the king. These two chamberlains must have frequently passed by him, and he might have overheard what they said.

23. In Persia, as well as in the kingdom of Judah, and Israel, there must have been persons whose office it was to make a record of all public transactions. But these records being for the use of the court only, and probably no copies being allowed to be taken, it is no wonder that in the subversion of the states they were lost.

Ch. III. 1. This, as appears from v. 7, was five years after. This Haman is supposed to have been descended from the royal family of the Amalekites. The reason of Mordecai's refusing to pay Haman the respect that others in his condition did, especially as the king had commanded it, does not appear. If it was even prostration, it was considered in those countries as nothing more than a mark of civil respect, and implied nothing of religious homage. The nation of the Amalekites was ordered to be extirpated, but so were the seven nations of the land of Canaan; and yet many individuals of these nations were even advanced to stations of honour and power under the best of the kings of Israel.

4. It was perhaps some amusement to them to see a contest between the pride of the one, and the obstinacy of the other. Tho' Mordecai had said he was a Jew, it does not appear that he made the declaration with a view to justify his behaviour to Haman.

6. Whatever offence Mordecai had given, it was far from justifying this degree of resentment.

7. Add the following necessary clause from the LXX
from month to month, to destroy in one day the race

of Mordecai, and the lot fell upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that is the month Adar. K.

It was customary with the heathens, who were great observers of times, as favourable or unfavourable to particular undertakings, to take notice of various omens, as prognostic of the issue, and also to cast lots in order to find the time that best suited their purpose. Haman's object was not merely the ruin of one man who had offended him, but the extirpation of a whole nation, dispersed through all the Persian empire. It does not, however, appear, that he took any measures to know whether the undertaking itself was proper, but only what was the proper time for carrying it into execution. Rather than be disappointed, he was willing to exercise much patience. For tho' the lots were cast in the first month, it so fell out that he must wait till the last in the year before any thing could be done. This was, no doubt, so directed by providence, to give time for defeating this horrible scheme.

This was in the twelfth year of Artaxerxes ; and if it was the same king that favoured the Jews in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, it was five years after the commission of the former, which is certainly some objection to its being the same prince, and in favour of its being, as some suppose, Aartaxerxes Mnemon, who reigned after him. But after five years a king of Persia might have forgotten the affairs of such a province as Judea then was ; and tho' he made the decree in favour of the Jews, he might not have given much attention to it even at the time ; things of the greatest consequence being often done at the suggestion of ministers, and the orders

ders merely signed by the prince, perhaps little informed of the nature of them. This was sufficiently the case with respect to the decree of this same prince for the extermination of the Jews procured by Haman.

8. Not the Jews only, but probably all other nations, were at this time allowed to have their own religions and laws, while they were tributary to Persia. But those of the Jews were, no doubt, fundamentally different from those of all other nations; whereas those of all the heathen nations had many principles in common.

9. This was to compensate for the diminution of the public revenue, which might be the consequence of the measure.

13. No reason is given for this violent resolution. But those who were to execute it being allowed to take the spoil, would tend to insure its being effected.

15. Many persons, no doubt, besides the Jews were alarmed at such a measure as this; and many, being in habits of friendship with them, must have been more particularly shocked at it.

Ch. IV. 5. As in the East women generally live secluded from all society, she might have remained for some time in ignorance of the cause of this deep mourning. Otherwise, no doubt, she would have been alarmed too. Tho' she had not said of what nation she herself was, it might have been discovered.

11. This could not have been by any contrivance or influence of Haman, for he did not know of what nation she was. But the king having many wives, must occa-

sionally have neglected some of them, even those who were generally his favourites.

14. He was justly confident that God would not permit his people to be destroyed : so that if she had not the merit of being the means of delivering them, some other person would.

16. This fasting was not a scrupulous abstinence from all food, but having no regular, and but scanty meals, and chiefly in the evening.

Ch. V. 2. This being a hazardous step, he must have been sensible that the occasion of it was something very uncommon.

3. This seems to have been a customary phrase to express great liberality. It was the same language that Herod used to the daughter of Herodias.

8. It was prudent not to urge her request immediately. The delay would raise the king's expectation ; and appearing to proceed from diffidence, would tend so prepossess him in her favour.

13. The greater was the favour shewn to him by the king and the queen, the keener would be his mortification for any contempt or insult from his inferiors.

14. How little do men often foresee the consequences of their own actions ; and how often do the evils they intend to bring upon others, fall upon themselves.

Ch. VI. 1. If ever there was a particular providence, as no doubt there is in every thing, it was in the indisposition of the king to sleep on this night.

3. It is evident that Mordecai had not petitioned for any favour or reward ; and the king, who no doubt, intended

intended to reward his fidelity at this time, had neglected to do it.

7. &c. A procession very like this is described by Pitts as the usual manner in which the Mahometans shew honour to those who embrace their religion, mounting them on horses, and parading with guards, &c. through the streets.

9. This had probably never been done to any person before ; but imagining himself to be the subject of it, he would make it as splendid as he could.

10. There is not perhaps in the whole compass of history an instance of greater disappointment and mortification than this must have been to Haman ; yet such is the simplicity of the narrative, that no remark is made upon it, any more than on some of the most affecting incidents in the history of Joseph in Egypt. This, however, does not make it the less, but the more, affecting to the reader.

11. This was a very natural inference, and amply verified in the event.

Ch. VII. 4. Nothing could be more moderate, or reasonable, than this request ; and it must have struck the king in the most forcible manner ; that his favourite queen should have occasion to beg for her own life. She likewise probably hinted at the loss which the king's revenue would sustain by the measure.

5. The cruelty and injustice were the very same had the decree respected any other nation ; but being that of the queen, and of a man who had rendered him so important a service as Mordecai had done, he now saw it in a different and just light.

6. The case being now life for life, she does not spare Haman, tho' he was present, and a favourite of the king's.

7. It shewed great command of temper in the king to retire in this manner, in order to consider what was most proper to be done ; tho', no doubt, his resentment would be sufficiently visible. Haman probably laid his hands on the queen's knees, as she was sitting on a sofa, as is the custom in the East, such a posture being a mode of earnest supplication.

8. The king could not suppose that any thing indecent was intended by Haman in these circumstances. But he chose to give it this colour to justify his resentment. They covered his face no doubt on a signal given by the king ; and it was probably meant to signify that he was not to see the king any more, being condemned to die.

9. This must have been said officiously, by those who wished to heighten the king's indignation against Haman. That he should be hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for another was natural and just. But the king does not seem to have considered his own guilt in consenting to the violent measures proposed by Haman, tho' it was certainly equal to that of Haman himself. Few persons see their conduct with the same eyes with which they view that of other men ; and who can punish kings for their manifold crimes, but the king of kings ?

There is a wonderful combination of circumstances in this short history, which makes it highly affecting and instructive ; shewing the secret conduct of divine providence

vidence in the affairs of men. And this drama, which is comprized in a short compass, is but a sample of the great drama, which comprehends this and every other event. For at the great catastrophe we shall, no doubt, see every instance of virtue rewarded, [and every act of wickedness punished, in as exemplary a manner as in the case before us; and the wisdom and justice of the supreme director of the whole will be as apparent.

Ch. VIII. 1. By his *house* is probably to be understood all his property.

4. She had before asked her own life, and that of her people; but the decree against them remained in force: She now requests that something may be done to counteract it; and for this purpose she had ventured to go into the presence of the king as she had done before.

12. This shews the absurdity of irrevocable decrees. All people were still allowed to plunder and destroy Jews, and there was no method of preventing it but by giving the Jews liberty to defend themselves, and destroy their enemies (which the first law of nature would have given them in their necessary defence) and this was authorizing a civil war in the country. However, the king's pleasure being by this means known, might be the means of preventing any great mischief.

17. From this time to that of our Saviour many persons of various nations, and some whole nations, as the Edomites, and perhaps the Moabites and Ammonites, became proselytes to the Jewish religion; and many more were led to think favourably of their religion; which, if they were persons of any reflection, we cannot wonder at; so absurd and abominable were the

rites of the heathen religions, and so decent those of the Jews. And in the doctrines of the Jews, there was the same manifest superiority over those of the heathens.

Ch. IX. 10. They would certainly have done themselves greater credit by their forbearance, than by this cruel revenge, tho' no doubt, there was great provocation for it. It appeared, however, that what they did was not from avarice, tho' leave was given them to plunder, as well as to kill, their enemies.

12. It should seem that the king was not pleased with this slaughter, nor could he be with the unsated revenge of the queen.

14. As the sons of Haman were hanged only after they were dead, it is probable that Haman himself was not exposed in this manner till after he was put to death.

16. There must have been a great number of Jews dispersed through all the provinces of the empire, for them to have been able to kill so many of their enemies, without fear of retaliation. They would, no doubt, have sold their own lives very dear, if the decree of Haman had been executed.

28. Accordingly this festival is observed by all Jews to this day ; and the whole of the book of Esther is constantly read through upon it.

31. As they had in the beginning of the year, when the decree against them was promulgated, ordered a general fast, so they now order the observance of an annual festival.

Ch. X.

Ch. X. 1. These *isles* were those of the Archipelago, which had been conquered by the king of Persia.

2. He had the office of *prime vizier*, as it is usually called in the East, directing all the most important affairs of the nation under the king.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J O B.

THIS book of Job is one of the oldest and most extraordinary productions that are now extant. The author is wholly unknown, but the scene of the transactions mentioned in it is in some part of Arabia, and the time is that of the ancient patriarchs. As there is an Eliphaz and a Teman among the descendants of Esau, the first his son, and the second his grandson, and the Eliphaz introduced into this work is called a Temanite, it is conjectured that he was of the family of this Teman; and if he was his son, he must have been cotemporary with Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron. And as there are in it no certain allusions to any events so late as the emancipation of the Israelites from

from their servitude in Egypt, it is probable that the writer was at least as ancient as Moses.

That Job was a real person may be inferred from the commendation of him, in conjunction with Noah and Daniel, by the prophet Ezekiel, and also from the names of his three daughters, their qualifications, and other particular circumstances, which are of no use in a fictitious story. That Job was very wealthy, that he was a man of the most exemplary piety and virtue, that he met with the most severe afflictions, but afterwards rose to a state of greater prosperity than he had ever known before, were probably facts well known at the time. It is not improbable also that the three friends of Job, and also Elihu, since their families are mentioned, were known to have been of his acquaintance, and to have visited him in his affliction. But it is not certain that their conversation was of the cast that is here given to it; and still less that each of the speakers argued in the manner that is here represented. On this foundation, however, the writer has exercised his ingenuity to great advantage, representing the sentiments of different persons on the great subject of divine providence in conducting the affairs of men, introducing a more impartial person to decide among them, and lastly the Divine Being himself addressing them all, and correcting their false judgments.

There is among the Hindoos a tradition very similar to this, but mixed with their absurd theology, and far less instructive. Since, however, it could not have been borrowed from this book, it affords some confirmation of the truth of the general history.

Several

Several words and phrases in this book having a great affinity to the Arabic, it is thought by some that the author of it composed it in that language, and that it was translated by Moses. But had this been the case we might have expected to find some reference to it in the writings of Moses, especially in his frequent reproaches of his countrymen for their impatience and obstinacy. Whoever was the author of it, it is probably the oldest artificial composition of much extent that has come down to us, and of which we have any account; and considered in this light both the plan and the execution of it have great merit. The two songs of Moses may perhaps be preferred to any thing in this work, but they are short, and require little judgment, taste, or ingenuity, compared to what we find in this book of Job.

As there are no allusions to this book in any part of the early history of the Israelites, some have been of opinion that it was brought to Solomon by the queen of Sheba. But all that can be said of the author, or the time of its being known to the Israelites, is wholly conjectural. As there does not appear to have been any regular collection of canonical books of scripture before the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, this book was probably classed with them at that time, on account of its antiquity, and the moral instructions with which it abounds.

Ch. I. 1. There were three persons of the name of Uz from whom this country might be denominated. One of them was the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham, who is thought to have settled in Arabia Deserta near

near the Euphrates, and it is the more probable that this was the country of Job, as he would there be exposed to injury by the Sabians to the South, and the Chaldeans to the North of him. If Job was the son of this Uz, he must have been the nephew of Abraham, and cotemporary with Isaac; and his religion, and the great length of his life, make this not improbable.

4. This very great wealth of Job, and the feasting of his sons, may be an exaggeration of the writer, to give the highest idea that he could of a state of great prosperity. He here gives the idea of a feast of seven days continuance, each of the brothers entertaining the rest in their turns.

5. The religion of Job was that which is commonly called the patriarchal, in which the Divine Being was approached and supplicated by sacrifices. Purification consisted in abstaining from food, and from commerce with women, and also in ablutions, which were always considered as emblematical of moral purity.

6. This must be considered as a parable, in which the Supreme Being is represented as keeping a court, such as was kept by an earthly prince, when the great men of the kingdom waited upon him to give him intelligence, and to receive his commands. It was an opinion universally prevalent in the early ages, that there are orders of intelligent beings superior to man, and of very different characters, some good, and others bad; and at the head of the latter they placed one superior to the rest, whom they considered the original author of all evil. And when the patriarchal religion began to be corrupted, and it was thought that no one being

being could of himself administer all the affairs of the world, without the aid of subordinate agents, it is no wonder that, while the Supreme Being was considered as benevolent, the author of all good, notwithstanding which there was much evil in the world, they should conclude that *this* had some other author, tho' subject to the control of the Supreme Being. This evil intentioned Being they usually called *Satan*, which signified *adversary*, thinking him to be unfriendly to men, and constantly employed in opposing the benevolent designs of God.

Other persons, however, might use this language without thinking that there existed any such evil being acting in this hostile manner ; using the term *Satan* to denote the *principle of evil in general*, personifying evil as we sometimes do *fortune, life, death, diseases*, and other things which we know to be only qualities, and no real beings, but merely for the convenience of discourse, when we prefer figurative to plain language. It is even probable that the writer of this book had this idea, because tho' in the opening of the work he speaks of Satan as a real person, presenting himself before God along with the holy angels, yet in the course of the work he always represents the evils of life as having the same author with the blessings of it. He constantly refers all to God, and makes no more mention of Satan, which is inconsistent with the idea of the interference of any malevolent intelligent being in the government of the world, even acting by commission from the Supreme Being, and much more opposing his benevolent intentions. Thus Milton, after describing *Death* and
Sin

Sin as real persons, makes no farther use of them in his poem, but considers sin as the criminal act of men, and death as the punishment inflicted for it by God.

15. These are thought to have been the descendants of Abraham by Keturah ; but among the Arabs there were several tribes which had this appellation.

19. This was a sudden hurricane, such as are pretty frequent in hot climates. They not only unroof and overturn buildings, but even tear up the largest trees, and change the whole face of a country. But this violence is generally confined to a small space. Each of these calamities separately taken might have happened in the manner that is here described ; but that the whole train should have taken place in this manner, only a single person escaping from each of them, and another arriving just as he had finished his narrative, is highly improbable. The design of the writer was to represent the heaviest calamities that could befall any man, and in such a manner as would most tend to overwhelm him. They are, therefore, great, numerous, and sudden.

22. This shews the most exemplary patience and resignation. He ascribes every thing to God, taking it for granted that all his dispensations are right and good, tho' he had evidently no hope, or expectation, of any change in his favour.

Ch. II. 7. Nothing more could be done to a man who was suffered to live. He was reduced to extreme poverty, and moreover afflicted with a loathsome disease,

8 It

8. It was among the ashes of the hearth that Job seated himself. This was considered as a sacred place, and proper for a person in deep affliction, petitioning for relief. Ashes were deemed sacred by the ancients. They were the assylum of the afflicted, and on this principle they sometimes swallowed them, and mixed them with their bread: MARTIN:

10. By *the foolish* may be meant *idolaters*, as in *Psa. lxxiv, 18*; and it is well known that they were used to revile their gods, and even beat their images, when they were displeased with them.

This language of Job's wife is incapable of a good meaning. What she suggested expresses impatience, and indignation at the injustice of God. She wishes him to express these sentiments to God himself, and then let him take his life, which was now all that he had to lose. However, he justly reproves her for it. He considered all his sufferings as coming from the hand of God, and that they had been fully compensated by the good which he had received before; so that he had no just reason to complain. For if it had pleased God to take from him every thing that he valued most, it was only what he had before given. The enjoyment of them had been a real favour, deserving his gratitude, and the deprivation of them was no injustice. These sentiments of pious resignation indicate very extraordinary attainments, such as could only arise from habitual devotion, respecting the hand of God in every thing, and ascribing to him nothing but what we ought always to be thankful for.

11 Eliphan

11. Eliphaz, as was observed before, is supposed to have been a descendant of Esau. Of the other two persons nothing probable has been conjectured. They were all Arabs, professing the patriarchal religion, the friends of Job in his prosperity, and who, with the best intentions, were come to visit and comfort him in his adversity.

12. That they should continue so long in this situation exceeds all probability. They must have eaten, and also have slept, in this time, as well as Job himself. But it was intended to be a representation of the deepest affliction, and the best mode of sympathy, not to interrupt the feelings of the afflicted person, but to soothe him by mourning with him. This behaviour, however, is more agreeable to the oriental manners and customs than to ours. To have spoken first would have been deemed a violation of decorum.

Ch. III. 1. The two preceding chapters are merely historical, and in prose. But the speeches, which begin with this chapter, are in that sententious form in which the peculiar excellence of oriental poetry consists. Whether this mode of composition requires any regular arrangement of syllables, as into long and short, &c. or in having any certain number of them in a verse, is uncertain. This chapter is truly poetical, containing very striking images, and the same idea is placed in a great variety of strong lights. Job prefers death to life, and earnestly wishes he had never been born. It is the natural language of grief and despair, and by no means of a piece with his former language of resignation; but tho' not justifiable, it is the more natural

ral after some experience of his afflictions, than at the commencement of them.

7. This is sometimes rendered, *May that night be fruitless*, that is, let there be no more births in it.

8. To *stir up Leviathan* is represented Ch xli, 8, &c. as inevitable destruction.

It appears probable from this, that there were at this time persons whose imprecations were thought to have some effect, like those of Balaam, who was sent for by Balak to curse Israel. Or he might only allude to the hired women; wishing they might lament over this day, as they did on other mournful occasions.

14. Things of great value were often buried with persons in antient times. The sepulchres of the kings of Israel were said to contain much treasure.

23. This is comparing his condition to that of a man shut up in a dungeon, out of which there was no possibility of escape.

26. The purport of this speech of Job is to lament his wretched situation, and to wish for relief by death.

Ch. IV. i. In the conduct of this drama; as this work may be called, each of the three friends of Job address him in their turns, each three times, first Eliphaz, then Bildad, and lastly Zophar; and Job replies to each of them. After this Elihu, a younger person, who had not been mentioned before, addresses Job, and lastly the Divine Being himself interposes, and decides between the parties.

5. Tho' he had instructed others, he now wanted instruction himself. He who had formerly exhorted others to patience, was himself become impatient.

6. Depending upon his virtue, and his favour with God, he had expected nothing but prosperity.

10. Be the wicked ever so powerful, the providence of God can bring them down:

17. Eliphaz appears to have seen, or to have thought that he had seen, a vision, but the occasion of it does not appear, nor is the instruction he pretends to have derived from it of much importance. What he means is that he was taught by this vision that if God afflict any person it must be taken for granted that the dispensation was just, and therefore that the sufferer was wicked.

18. Even the wisest and the best of created beings are subject to vice and folly, the angels themselves, and much more men.

Ch. V. 1. The phrases *call* and *answer* are said to be law terms; the first the language of the complainant, or plaintiff, and the latter that of the defendant.

He appeals to the opinion of the wisest and best of men, as the same with his.

2. If any man suffer, it must be for his folly, his violence, his envy, or some other evil propensity. The anger of God will not fall on any other. For the truth of this he appeals to his own observation.

7. Since all afflictions come by order of divine providence, and men are subject to them, they must be deserving of them.

8. He therefore recommends to Job a frank confession and repentance, as a sure way to recover the divine favour, and a return of prosperity; it being in the power of God to do whatever he pleases.

24 Where-

24. Wherever he pitched his tent, he should, after wandering ever so far, readily find it again. And in some parts of the deserts of Arabia, where there are no paths but such as are soon obliterated by the wind removing the sand, the wandering about, unable to find a man's house, may be a serious inconvenience.

Ch. VI 1. In this reply of Job he repeats his lamentation, and complains of the want of sympathy in his friends.

3. *Therefore my words are vehement*, a metaphor from boiling water that runs over.

4. The art of poisoning arrows appears to have been of great antiquity.

5. If brute animals do not complain without reason, much less will men; and they do not complain when they are fed to the full.

6. What you say is not to the purpose. It is insipid, and heard with disgust.

7. I reject what you say as I would disgusting food; I cannot admit the propriety of it.

8. He again expresses his wish to die.

10. I have never disobeyed the orders of God, but have submitted to them all, and so should I to this, if he would even be pleased to take my life.

13. Is it not now evident that I have no resource left in body or in mind?

14. He that denies compassion to his friend in affliction, has not the fear of God.

15. Many streams and rivers in Arabia are dry in summer.

16. The meaning of this verse is extremely uncertain. If there be ice and snow in Arabia, it is probably a rare phenomenon (tho' it might be common in the time of Job) and would hardly conceal rivers or make them useless; whereas the allusions from v. 15 to 20, is to water that is not to be found in the place where it was expected by caravans, in their usual journeys:

21. When you see my afflictions, do you not fear lest the like should befall yourselves?

22. Did I ask any favour or relief from you? I expect to sink under my affliction.

26. In this he challenges his friends to shew him what he had done to deserve so heavy a judgment. Whereas their only object seems to have been to add to his affliction, and drive him to despair, by contradicting him.

28. Consider my case, and you will find that there is reason in what I say.

30. If I have said any thing that was improper, could not I have discerned as well as you?

Ch. VII. 1. He here laments the condition of men in general, as if they had all as much reason to wish for the end of their lives as slaves the end of the day, which terminates their labour.

10. After all the labour and sorrow of life, his only resource was in the grave, which would put an end to his trouble.

12. Am I so furious and formidable that I must be guarded against, like the sea, or a wild beast, when I am one of the most helpless of creatures? Was it necessary to humble such a one as me by these afflictions?

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The animal intended in this place may be a crocodile. When they are discovered they are carefully watched in order to destroy them. In Is. xxvii, 1, the word is rendered the *dragon that is in the sea*.

14. Even in the night I have no quiet repose, but am haunted with frightful dreams.

17. Why should God, as it were, contend with so insignificant a being as man?

20. It should rather be thou *observer of men*, the inspector, and judge of their conduct.

If I had sinned, what could I do against God, so as to be a proper object of his indignation. This is the sense of the LXX, and other antient versions.

21. If, therefore, I be an offender, let me alone as an insignificant being, and suffer me to die quietly.

Ch. VIII. 1. Bildad endeavours in this chapter to enforce the arguments of Eliphaz, and exhorts Job to repentance, with an assurance of pardon and favour.

3. Would God punish a man who was guilty of no offence against him.

13. As rushes, which flourish only where they have much water, are most subject to wither, as well as to be cut down before they wither; so uncertain is the flourishing state of hypocrites, such as he took Job to be. But it should rather be the *profligate*, or openly impious man, a *profane scoffer*, as in Ps. xxxv, 16, and Jer. xxiii, 15.

17. Rather *about the springs*. So the word is translated, Cant. iv, 12.

18. If *it* i. e. the sun, *destroy it*.

He compares a wicked man to a tree whose roots are among rocks, so that it seems to be safe from any accident; yet it shall be so effectually rooted up, that the very place where it grew, if it were inquired of, would deny that it had ever been there, which is a peculiarly strong figure of speech.

Ch. IX. 1. Job, in answer to Bildad, acknowledges the power of God, and the unsearchableness of his ways, but complains of his confounding the innocent with the guilty, and still wishes for death.

3. I acknowledge the power of God; but let a man be ever so innocent, how can he plead his cause before him? If a man urge ever so many things in his vindication, he will not condescend to make any reply.

4. It is in vain to resist his will, whatever be his designs.

9. It is uncertain what these stars, or constellations, were. That which is translated *Orion* is supposed to mean those stars which chiefly appear in the winter, and the *pleiades* those which usher in the spring.

11. Mr. Scott translates this verse as follows, *Lo he fell upon me, but I saw him not, He struck me also, but I understood him not. Behold he seized me. Who can make him restore. Who shall say unto him, what hast thou done?*

12. This is a sublime description of the power of God, ascribing all the operations of nature to him.

13. If God do not voluntarily restrain his indignation, the proud and the powerful can give a man no assistance,

15. If I were ever so righteous, it would be in vain for me to plead it before him. I would only supplicate for mercy.

16. If I had asked for any favour, and had obtained my wish, I should not think it was owing to any regard he had for me, or to my intreaty. I am too insignificant for his notice.

20. If I should justify myself before him, he would pay no regard to it. I should still be treated as a sinner. He makes no distinction of characters.

23. Rather *it* will laugh, viz. the scourge, or public calamity, will spare none.

24. If God do make the distinctions which you say he does, between the righteous and the wicked, how does it appear ?

To *cover the face* means to condemn to death, as was done to Haman——If it be not God who does this, who is it that does it.

25. Travelling in caravans with camels is very slow ; but on dromedaries equipped for expedition a rider carrying messages goes with the greatest speed.

26. Literally, *ships of cane*, probably light vessels made of papyrus, and used on the Nile.

28. I am in dread of every evil.

29. If I be wicked, why am I not dead (so the LXX) as I wish to be:

31. Were I ever so innocent, I should be treated as if I were guilty.

33. The word in the original does not signify an *umpire*, but an authorised judge. In Amos v, 10, it is rendered *he that rebuketh*.

35 I have

35. I have no opportunity of getting a fair hearing from him ; but if he would withdraw his hand, which is now heavy upon me, and allow me to plead for myself, I would do it without fear, and with some hope of success ; but I am not in that situation.

Ch. X. 1. Job continues his expostulation with God, for having brought him into being merely to make him miserable. Being without hope, he still wishes for death.

4. Dost thou take such methods as men are obliged to do in order to judge of characters, and therefore tryest me in this cruel manner.

6. Art thou like a short lived man, envious of my prosperity, and taking advantage of every slight offence, for the sake of punishing me.

7. But tho' thou knowest my integrity, I am wholly in thy power.

8. Have I been formed with this curious structure, and am I, after all, to be thrown away as of no use?

9. As I must soon die in the common course of nature, why put me to this unnecessary pain?

10. Have I not been brought by thee from the most imperfect to the most perfect state, giving consistence and strength to my bodily frame. This is supposed to be an allusion to the formation of man in the womb,

13. With this thou art perfectly acquainted,

15. By *these things* he means his *sufferings*, insinuating that God had given him being, with a secret purpose to make him miserable.

If I be guilty I suffer, and if I be innocent it does not avail me,

17 Notwith,

17. Notwithstanding my innocence thy anger is unabated. I am as it were attacked by a host of troubles.

This may be rendered *thou repeatest thy weapons*, or attacks, preserving an allusion to a chase.

22. All that can be inferred from this language is that in the state of death man has no sense or knowledge of any thing. In this we see the idea that was at this time generally entertained of the state of the dead. It was certainly inconsistent with any enjoyment or with sense.

Ch. XI. 1. In this chapter Zophar takes up the same argument with his companions, blaming Job for presuming to vindicate himself, and assuring him of pardon on his repentance. There was a city called Naama on the borders of Idumea, Josh. xv, 41, of which this Zophar might be an inhabitant.

4. This may be rendered *my conscience*. The LXX has *my works*. He had said nothing about his doctrine.

6. He perhaps meant that the wisdom of God is twice as great, that is, much greater, than he conceived it to be. Houbigant renders it thus, "He could tell thee to thy face the secrets of thy craftiness, for they are double to thy real worth."

12. *That the proud may become wise, and the colt of a wild ass become a man.* It is an Arabian proverb, the wild ass signifying a man who is intractable like that animal.

In all this he reproves Job for complaining of the ways of God, as if he did him injustice. For tho' his dealings are incomprehensible, they are, no doubt, just.

He

He then proceeds to urge Job to an ingenuous confession and repentance.

Ch. XII. 1. Job, in answer to what his friends had urged, tells them that he knew as well as they all that they had advanced concerning the great power of God, and the unsearchableness of his councils ; but that notwithstanding his sufferings, he could defend his integrity in the presence of God himself.

4. You only mock me when you exhort me to call upon God, and say that he will answer, meaning that if I will make confession of my sin he will restore me.

5. The meaning of this verse is very uncertain. According to Le Clerc it is, " Ye despise the lights that are given to me by God, and are secure, ready to fall upon any one that stumbles." The literal version is, *For calamity contempt is ready in the thoughts of him who is at ease, for them who slip with their feet ; calamity being put for the calamitous, those who slip with their feet, or who fall.*

7. From this place Job imitates his friends, extolling the great power, and wisdom of God ; shewing them that he knew as much of this subject as they did, so that they had no occasion to enlarge upon it as they had done.

16. God overrules all the vices of men, and all the mischief they do to answer his wise purposes.

18. He destroys their binding power, putting an end to their authority, and makes them captive to others, who bind them in chains, and carry them away.

Ch. XIII. 1. 7—8. Will you take the part of God against me, and do me injustice ?

9 Do

9. *Do you flatter him*; for so the word may be rendered, at the expence of truth.

14. Why am I reduced to this miserable state?

A thing held in the hand may easily slip out of it: The phrase, therefore, implies that he would risk his life, tho' with little prospect of preserving it, in the defence of his innocence.

15. Let him treat me ever so cruelly I am confident that I can maintain my innocence before him.

19. *For now I will be still, and will die*, i. e. if an accuser appear, and prove his charge against me, I will be silent, and die content.

21. Do not overawe me by mere power, but attend to my reasons.

26. If my sufferings be the punishment of my sins, they must be those of my youth, which ought to be overlooked and forgotten.

27. *Thou observest all my actions with too severe an eye*, not making reasonable allowance for mere frailties. Some ignominious punishment is, no doubt, referred to; probably that of slaves, but what it was is uncertain.

28. This verse seems to be misplaced, and will come better after his description of the lamentable condition of man in the next chapter.

Ch. XIV. 1. Job laments the condition of man in general, as subject to much trouble; pleading that it is hard to add to this, and to make him more miserable by heavy judgments.

3. In Zech xvii, 6, the word denotes *looking angrily*. In that day, saith the Lord, I will open mine eyes
upon

upon the house of Judah, and will smite every house of the people with blindness.

4. Absolute perfection is not to expected of man.

12. From the consideration of the shortness of life, and the miserable condition of man in it, he pleads for compassion from God.

15. If it were possible I would wish to be hid even in the grave, till the storm of divine indignation be passed; and then, when all should be calm, I might plead my cause with more success. The most obvious inference from the whole of this passage is, that in the state of death man has no sense or knowledge of any thing; but that when *the heavens are no more*, i. e. in some future and very distant period, the dead will be raised. God will then call, and he will answer.

16. But at present I have no favour shewn me. Every trifling offence, if I do not suffer for them, is kept in remembrance, and magnified.

18. Things that bid the fairest for permanency fail in a course of time; and weak man is much more easily reduced, and at length brought to death.

21. When he is dead he knows nothing of the condition of his posterity.

22. But while he lives he is continually subject to pain of body and anguish of mind. Such is the wretched condition of man.

Ch XV. 1. Eliphaz, returning to the charge, expresses great indignation against Job for his contempt of him and his friends, and enlarges on the insecurity of the wicked, tho' to appearance they be ever so prosperous.

6. His own language in arraigning the conduct of providence, was a proof of his impiety, and of the justice of God in punishing him.

11. Dost thou make light of the indignation of God; or hast thou some secret charm? This is the sense that Houbigant gives to this verse, but it is very uncertain.

12. To *wink with the eyes* was an expression of contempt.

15. This he had observed before, Ch. iv, 18.

19. Not only men of great wisdom, but of so much power that no stranger could enter into their territories.

20. This is a fine description of the terrors of a guilty conscience. This to v. 31 seems to be a quotation from some old poems or proverbs.

22. He cannot expect to live till morning.

28. He had by oppression driven away the former inhabitants.

Ch. XVI. 1. Job complains of a want of compassion in his friends, a compassion which he would have shewn them, if they had been in his situation. He repeats the protestation of his innocence, and his desire to plead with God.

7. He has deprived me of the consolation that I expected from my friends.

8. Mr. Scott renders this as follows, *Thou hast also apprehended me, viz. as a malefactor. He is become a witness against me. Yea he that believeth me rises up against me. He accuses me to my face.*

15. A horn signifies honour.

18. If I speak this falsely, may the earth not cover
my

my blood, but let the dogs lick it up. This was reckoned a great misfortune.

22. Mr. Scott translates — *For my few years are come to an end, and I go the way whence I shall not return.*

Ch. XVII. 2. The meaning of this verse is very uncertain, especially of the last clause. It may be that he could not sleep for their provocations.

3. He intreats that God would bear witness to his integrity.

To *strike*, or *shake hands*, seems to have been a sufficient ratification of the most solemn engagement. The meaning may be, Who will undertake the part of plaintiff in this case, i. e. to be an advocate for God, to justify the ways of his providence towards me?

4. According to the Syriac version, the meaning is *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding, therefore thou wilt not exalt them to a part*, in this cause, i. e. of being parties, or advocates, on the behalf of God: Elihu uses the same expression Ch. xxxii, 17, *I will not answer my part.*

5. This is a very difficult verse. Le Clerc gives the following sense. "They are ready to inform against me, if they can gain any thing by it; and their children are full of envy," By removing the word that begins this verse to the end of the preceding, the sense will be *He uttereth malicious things, and the eyes of his children shall fail.*

9. Good men will be astonished at my afflictions, but will still persevere in virtue. This sentiment, however, does not seem to arise naturally in Job's state of mind.

In

In the latter part of this verse he may speak ironically.

12. My thoughts will not suffer me to sleep even in the night. Mr. Scott renders it, *The night is appointed to me for day, the light is near from the face of darkness*; i. e. Henceforth the day which I am to enjoy is the night of death, and the light which is ordained for me is the darkness of the grave.

Ch. XVIII. There is nothing in this reply of Biddad but a contempt of what Job had advanced, and an exaggerated description of the judgments of God upon the wicked.

9. It should be, *and the entangling cord holds him fast: He is now caught*. This verse, therefore, should come after the next, finishing this branch of the description.

13. *The first born of death*, means the child of diseases.

Ch. XIX. Job complains of the want of sympathy in his friends, as a great addition to his sufferings, which he describes in the strongest language, but expresses his hope that God would finally appear in his favour.

19. It is evident from this that the preceding narrative could not be a literal account of transactions. For according to it Job, on receiving the full measure of his sufferings, placed himself in a posture of mourning, on the ashes of the hearth; and there his friends found him, and after continuing seven days in the same place, began their conference with him. But here he refers to incidents which this account does not admit of. They imply an intercourse with the world, as well as with his own

own family, in which he met with the most unworthy and opprobrious treatment.

This may refer to the custom of some barbarous conquerors in the East, who cut off the lips of their captives, which might be called the skin, or covering, of the teeth.

24. Writing on lead, Pliny informs us, was of great antiquity, and came into use next after writing on the bark and leaves of trees, and was used to record public transactions. He was so far from retracting any thing that he had said, that he wished his words were engraven on a rock, and in such a manner as never to be obliterated.

25. This verse, and those which immediately follow, have been the subject of much controversy; christians in general from the earliest times maintain that Job declares his faith in a happy resurrection at the last day, and this, I have no doubt, is the right construction; but others think that he only hoped for a temporary deliverance: Dr. Kennicott thinks that he did not refer to either, but only to God's appearing in favour of his innocence before his death, which he actually did; but of this Job could not have had any reasonable expectation, and much of his language is inconsistent with it. His wishing so often for death, as the end of all his troubles, shews that he had no expectation of any temporal deliverance. For a more particular account of this text, and of the subject in general, I refer the reader to my *Essay on the knowledge that the ancient Hebrews had of a future state*.

29 This

29. This is reasoning so much on the principles of his adversaries, concerning divine judgments following crimes, that it looks like an argument *ad hominem*, as if he said ; since you expect temporal calamity as a punishment for wickedness, dread it for yourselves, on account of your cruel persecution of me, in adding to my affliction.

Ch. XX. There is nothing in this speech of Zophar but an exaggerated account of the various miseries ; and final destruction that await all wicked men.

Butter is generally liquid in the hot climates of the East, and in order to prevent it they melt and clarify it, and then keep it in jars for future use.

27—28. Mr. Scott proposes to place these verses after v. 21, as explanatory of the means by which the dissipation of the fortunes shall be effected. These are the operations of both the heavens and the earth.

Ch. XXI. Job in this part of his reply shows how much his adversaries had mistaken the ways of providence ; since it was evident to observation, that all wicked men were not punished as they had represented, but lived all their lives in great prosperity.

4. My appeal and complaint are not addressed to you, but to God ; and I do not complain without reason.

15. This being the known language of wicked men, Job argues from it, that there are some facts in the conduct of providence, which seem at least to authorize it.

16. That is, I am far from thinking that they argue justly, or that their resolution in favour of wickedness is a reasonable one. For they are often disappointed

in their expectations. But according to the LXX, it should be rendered negatively, "Is not their good in their own hands."

17. By this interrogation may be understood that it is seldom put out, which is agreeable to Job's argument.

18. In this Job seems to question what his friends had said concerning the calamities of the wicked, and therefore we should render it interrogatively, v. 19, 20.

20. As to what befalls his children when he is dead, he has no interest in it, and it cannot affect him in any way.

26. Some wicked men live happily, and some good men miserably, and are alike subject to death.

31. To this verse from v. 28, Job repeats what his friends had advanced of judgments awaiting the prosperous wicked. Who even dare to censure this prosperous wicked man, or revenge the injuries that he does?

32. Notwithstanding his wickedness, he will be buried with great pomp, and his sepulchre remain undisturbed.

Ch. XXII. In this third and last speech of Eliphaz, he charges Job with his supposed wickedness in a variety of respects, and exhorts him to repentance, with a prospect of his restoration.

4. In order to reprove Job for his frequent appeals to God, he represents him as a Being too high, and too independent to regard him. As having no interest in his virtue, and having nothing to fear from Job, he has no occasion to justify his conduct to him.

8 Th.

8. The Vulgate gives a sense to this verse the most agreeable to the context: "By the strength of thy arm thou possessest the earth; and being more powerful, dost seize upon it."

15. This is by some rendered *Submit thyself to him, or humble thyself before him.*

16. This seems to allude to the general deluge.

24. Rather *thou shalt count fine gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brook*; that is, they shall be of no more account with thee, they shall be so plentiful.

30. Mr. Scott renders it, *The innocent shall deliver a country; and it shall be delivered by the pureness of his hands.*

Ch. XXIII. In the two following chapters Job repeats his earnest wish for an opportunity of pleading with God; and he maintains that the wicked often escape unpunished:

7. I should then be acquitted at his tribunal, tho' not at your's.

13. Whatever his purpose may be, he will execute it, notwithstanding my innocence.

17. I am still kept alive, notwithstanding all my sufferings.

Ch. XXIV. 1. This verse is very obscure. The LXX has, "Why are the seasons unknown to God, and the wicked transgress all bounds." That is, why does not God make the distinctions that circumstances require, in consequence of which the wicked are encouraged in their ways.

L 2

5 Rather

5. Rather, for *meat*, or eatables, as Ps. xxxi, 15, *She giveth meat to her household.*

6—8. The complaint in these verses turns upon the barbarous treatment of the labouring poor, who work in the fields and the vineyards. *They reap every one a field which is not his own*, agreeable to the LXX and the Chaldee.

11. *Who work in the vineyards at noon day*, which was great oppression in a hot climate.

12. i. e. God takes no notice of it, does not punish them.

18. I cannot make any good sense of this verse. Le Clerc does not attempt to paraphrase it. Mr. Scott supposes this to be an account of the punishment that overtakes the wicked, especially the adulterers; and thinks it may be rendered, *Let them be as a light thing upon the waters. Let their portion in the earth be accursed. Let them not behold the way of the vineyards*, i. e. Let them not enjoy any felicity.

19. Drought and heat cause water to evaporate silently and quietly; so the wicked go to their graves in peace without any violent deaths.

21. They are gathered into the grave as corn fully ripe is reaped in time of harvest.

Ch. XXV. In this reply of Bildad he expresses great contempt for Job's protestation of his innocence, before such a Being as God.

2. He reigns uncontrolled, even in heaven.

Ch. XXVI. Job in contempt of what Bildad had said concerning the power of God, enlarges on the same sub-

subject, to shew them that his ideas of the majesty and power of God were at least as high as theirs.

4. From whom had you this information?

5. Here Job begins to speak of the power of God, instancing in the larger animals, especially those in the sea, for the word may be rendered *giants*, and therefore probably huge creatures of any kind.

Mr. Scott thinks that this is an account of the power of God in *sheol*, and renders it *The giants are in anguish under the waters, together with their families. Sheol is naked before him, and destruction has no covering. The Rephaim are synonymous to Nephelim, and Emins, men who, on account of their huge bulk, were a terror to others. Hence tyrannical princes are so called, Ez. xxxii, 21, &c. and Isaiah speaking of the king of Babylon says, Hell from beneath is moved for thee, and stirreth up the dead (Rephaim) for thee.*

12. This Mr. Scott says should be, *He quieteth the sea by his power, when by his understanding he has dashed the proud waves thereof.*

13. *By his wind the heavens become serene.* By the slaying of the *bar serpent*, seems to be meant his dashing the sea monsters against the rocks, and destroying them in a storm.

This is thought to refer to the constellation called *the Serpent* in the heavens.

Ch. XXVII. The friends of Job making no farther reply to him, he proceeds in a strain of triumph, renewing his complaints, asserting his innocence, and withal expressing his high idea of the power of God, and the unsearchableness of his ways.

13. The last part of this chapter from v. 13, contains sentiments so much the reverse of those which were before expressed by Job, and so much the same with those of his opponents, that it is very probable, as Dr. Kennicott supposes, it was originally a speech of Zophar, who otherwise replies only twice; whereas his two companions reply three times. It also begins with a sentiment which he had expressed at the close of the last speech, Ch. xx, 29. *This is the portion of the wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.* Here he begins with the repetition of this, and then proceeds in continuation.

22. The agent in this place is the East wind, *It shall cast itself upon him, and not spare.*

23. The agent is still the East wind. *It shall clap its hands at him, and it shall hiss, &c.*

Ch. XXVIII. I see no reason why this whole chapter may not be considered as a continuation of the speech of Zophar, especially as Ch. xxix begins with the mention of Job's resuming his discourse.

After observing that there is a certain place for every natural production, he says that men have not yet found out the place for *wisdom*, as they have for gold, and other things of value.

1. By *wisdom* in this place may perhaps be understood a knowledge of the general plan of providence. And the inference from the whole is that, instead of prying into mysteries which we cannot understand, it is the duty of man to adore his maker, and practice his commands.

3 He

3. *He searches to every extremity stones of darkness, &c.* i. e. he follows the metallic ore as far as it goes.

4. *He breaks up the valley near the bottom of the mountain. They are forgotten of the foot, they sink down, they wander from men.*

5. His caverns abound with sulphur, and other inflammable materials.

9. He breaks the hardest flint and marble, in order to come at ore.

10. They carry aqueducts over vallies, and sometimes through rocks, &c.

13. From this it is evident that by *wisdom* in this place is not meant religion.

28. This account of the source of wisdom, and of the great value of it, is truly poetical, and the conclusion is admirable. But it suits the purpose of Zophar better than that of Job, as he might mean to insinuate that Job had not the fear of God before his eyes, having given himself up to wicked courses. With this all the speeches of Job's friends terminate. But tho' there are three of them, there is no considerable difference in their arguments or characters; and for each of them speaking just three times, and Job answering them all separately, there does not seem to have been any good reason. They might have begun where they ended, or have ended where they began. The same may be said very nearly of Job's replies. They all speak to the same purpose, and Job replies in the same manner. They all, and Job as well as they, introduce noble descriptions of the power and wisdom of God, and constantly at-

cribe the creation of all things, and the disposal of all events, to him.

Ch. XXIX. Job's three friends having advanced all that they thought proper, he resumes his discourse, without referring to them; complaining as at the first, comparing his present abject state with his former prosperous one, and asserting his innocence as before.

3. The tents of princes in the East are frequently illuminated; so the meaning here may be that my tent was illuminated, and I passed the night by the light of it.

4. That is, when I was in great favour with God, as if he had been my intimate friend, had frequently visited me, and concealed nothing from me.

7. Courts of judicature were held in open spaces near the gates of cities, and there Job had sat and been highly respected. Chardin says that it is customary in the East for persons of distinction to have cushions placed for them on benches in the open street.

11. This is equivalent to *loosing the bonds of kings*, Ch. xii, 18, i. e. destroying their authority.

12. This is a fine description of an intelligent and upright man, a blessing to the country in which he lived, and proportionably respected by all persons.

Ch. XXX. 1. He makes the contrast between his former and his present condition, in which he was insulted by the meanest wretches.

For *juniper* the Chaldee has a kind of *broom*.

11. He has, as it were, loosed the cord by which my tent was fastened to the ground, and others insult me without restraint.

15 *Terrors*

15. *Terrors were turned upon me. They pursued my dignity as wind.*

18. His many sores had made it difficult for him to change his drefs.

24. The sense of this verse is very uncertain. Le Clerc supposes him to mean that he would not have complained of his ill treatment, if he had shewn as little compassion for others as they shewed for him. And what follows is in this strain. Mr. Scott conjectures that it might have originally been to this purpose, *Oh that there might be in his destroying stroke an alleviation of these pains, praying for a gentle death.*

29. In this place it is thought that *tannim* may signify *jackals*, which make a hideous noise in the night. The word rendered *owls* in the text, and *ostriches* in the margin, is literally *daughters of vociferation*; and ostriches make a frightful noise in the night.

35—37. These verses, Mr. Scott thinks, ought to close the chapter.

Ch. XXXI. 1. Job enumerates all the more considerable crimes of which men were guilty, and declares his innocence with respect to them all.

2. I could not have expected any favour from God if I had indulged impure desires.

3. He does not deny that God, in his providence, punishes the wicked; but thought that he did not always spare the righteous.

8 Job had now no children, but it may be rendered *Let my produce be rooted out, as by floods, and other causes of desolation.*

10 Let

10. Let my wife be reduced to the most abject servitude ; the grinding of corn being the office of female slaves.

14. Probably judges stood up when they pronounced sentence, and this is an allusion to human judicatures.

18. If it was a female that he befriended, it was probably a widow, as mentioned above; but the ancient versions in general, do not make the object of his compassion a female.

22. He wishes that if his arm was held up to threaten, or abuse an orphan, it might be broken.

28. It may be rendered, *It were an iniquity*, my judges appealing to God.

This well describes the first state of idolatry, in the worship of the heavenly bodies, as the voluntary causes of good or ill to men ; and it seems that, in the country of Job, this was considered as a crime exposing the offender to punishment, at least it was a thing almost universally condemned ; for the word in the original does not necessarily imply any more, as Dr. Kennicott has shewn.

33. Here is a plain allusion to the history of Adam, such as is related in the first book of Moses; but it does not follow that this book was then written. The history of Adam was probably at that time as well known by tradition to mankind in general, as it was to Moses himself.

34. Was I ashamed of my conduct, and durst not go abroad, lest I should incur indignation and contempt?

35 It

35. It is evident that the art of writing was supposed not to have been unknown in the time of Job. And there was not writing, or engraving, on stones only, which was before alluded to, but on portable materials.

36. Badges of honour were carried on the shoulder in antient times. MARTIN. Sir Thomas Roe says that when the great mogul sends letters to any governor, as soon as he sees them he alights from his horse, falls down upon the earth, and, taking them from the messenger, lays them on his head, and there binds them fast. He then retires to read and answer them.

38—40 These verses should be placed after v. 25 Mr. GREY, and Durell consider v. 40 as an interpolation.

40. The word translated *cockle* signifies some offensive weed, but of what kind is uncertain.

Ch. XXXII. It appears from this chapter that several persons were supposed to have been present at this interview between Job and his friends, and among them Elihu, who is thought to have been descended from Nahor, the brother of Abraham, because Ram, of whose kindred Elihu was, was his second son. Being younger than Job, or any of the three who had spoken before, he waited till they were silent, and then after making a proper apology, addressed them all. But tho' he censures them all it does not appear from what he says that there was much reason for it, with respect to Job's friends. For all that he says coincides very nearly with their observations concerning the power and supremacy of God, and his righteous administration. Like them also, he exhorts Job to an acknowledgment

judgment of his sins, assuring him of pardon and favour, tho' he does not, like the three, suppose that he had been a very wicked man.

9. They had not proved him to be guilty of any particular crime.

13. They had not given any proof of their superior knowledge by answering his arguments. God had humbled him, but not they.

15. This seems to have been addressed to a mixed company, who were present at the conference.

Ch. XXXIII. 12. Job did wrong to complain of the dispensations of divine providence, tho' he suffered from them; and since God is unquestionably both just and good, he ought to have concluded that there was some good reason for his afflicting him, tho' he was not conscious of any sin.

14. This verse is variously rendered. It may signify that, tho' God gave sufficient admonition by his providence, men do not give due attention to it. The Vulgate has *God speaketh once, but does not repeat the same thing a second time.*

17. God gives to man what knowledge he pleases, and in what manner he pleases; sometimes in visions of the night, but his object is ever the same, viz. to correct men's vices, and especially to abate their pride and self sufficiency.

22. He likewise teaches men by his providence, and both by prosperous and adverse events.

23. There is much uncertainty in the translation of this verse. The LXX has, "If there be a thousand evil angels against him, not one of them shall hurt him"

"him: If he turn unto God with all his heart, and
"make his complaint to him, he will deliver him from
"death."

28. This is preaching repentance, as no doubt in
Elihu's idea, suiting the case of Job.

30. Elihu does not treat Job as a wicked man, but
speaks of divine rebukes as intended to cure faults which
were not inconsistent with general goodness. *Mr. Scott.*

Ch. XXXIV: 8. This is exactly the language of the
friends of Job.

9. Job had not said this; but his complaint of God's
dealings with him, tho' an innocent man, might be con-
strued to have that meaning.

15. This is only a description of the great power of
God, in disposing of the world, and of men, as he pleas-
es, which had been before advanced by the friends of
Job, and by Job himself.

18. Even an earthly prince would not bear the lan-
guage that Job addressed to God.

19. If earthly princes are not to be confuted, much
less is the Almighty.

29. It should be rendered, *When he hideth the face
who can behold it.* *Hiding the face,* means to condemn;
and if God do this, no person can save him that is con-
demned.

30. This should have been, *a profligate, not a hypo-
crite*; and the same sense may be put upon the word in
other parts of the scriptures.

31. Mr. Heath renders it, *I lift up (my hand) let me
not be destroyed.* In Is. xxxvii, 4, we read, *I lift up my
prayer.*

31—33 This

31—33. This language suits a person, who tho' is the main good, might suspect that there was something in him at which God might be offended. Elihu always supposes affliction to be corrective.

32. Men ought to take it for granted that when they suffer by the hand of God they have deserved it, whether they be sensible of any crime or not.

33. This is a very difficult verse. The most probable sense seems to be that we must not expect to be dealt with as we wish. God will determine as he thinks proper without consulting us.

Ch. XXXV. 2. He had not said this; but it might be inferred from his justification of himself when God afflicted him.

10. Notwithstanding the great power of God, so that he is incapable of receiving good or harm from men, they are from him, they do not look up to him. It is in his power, however, to turn their affliction into joy. But the latter clause of the verse is variously rendered, i. e. Tho' they complained of oppression, they do not sufficiently humble themselves before God. In the *night* means in the *time of calamity*.

13. They complain when they are oppressed, but not in such a manner as that God might regard them.

14. In the Syriac it is, *Thou sayest thou shalt not praise him*. It is evident that Elihu did not suppose Job to expect temporal deliverance.

14. Tho' thou complaineest that thou hast no opportunity of pleading thy cause before him, he will do whatever he thinks proper, and thou must acquiesce in it.

15 There

15. There is much uncertainty in the translation of this verse. It may be, Because thou Job hast not shewn this disposition, God has continued to afflict thee, and thou art still obstinate. Mr. Scott proposes to translate as follows, *But now because his anger has not visited, neither has noticed great excesses, therefore Job does open his mouth.*

Ch. XXXVI. 4. My words shall not be false, for my knowledge of this subject is complete.

18. This is accusing Job of not repenting and humbling himself before God, which had been the language of all his three friends.

20. Do not confide in secrecy, any more than in riches. God can destroy them all.

By night may be meant *death*, which Job had wished for.

24. This verse begins a new subject, viz. the incomprehensible wisdom and power of God, to convince Job of his ignorance of the ways of providence, by his ignorance of the works of creation.

32. Mr. Scott translates as follows *He holdeth the lightning with both his hands, and giveth it commandment concerning him that prayeth. His thunder announces concerning him. Jealousy and anger against the impious.*

Ch. XXXVII. 7. In such seasons as these the labours of men are suspended.

9. Mr. Savary says that the South wind in Egypt fills the air with a subtle dust that almost stops respiration, and is sometimes attended with whirlwinds that are fatal to travellers.

10 This

10. This should be rendered; *The broad waters become hard.*

13. A small transposition will make the sense clearer. *Whether for correction, or for mercy, verily for his earth he causeth it to come.*

18. It is supposed that a great darkness announced the approach of the Divine Being, who soon after appears.

22. Instead of *fair weather*, it should be *the golden sun comes forth*.

24. *Let men, therefore, fear him; who beholdeth all the wise in heart, as a nothing.* SCOTT.

33. Thus he enlarges on the works and power of God, in order to repress the arrogance of Job.

The purport of all that he advances in this chapter is to repress the arrogance of Job, by describing the wonderful and incomprehensible works of God, which had been the object of the greatest part of what he and the friends of Job had advanced before.

Ch. XXXVIII. The author of this work having introduced Elihu as an impartial judge between Job and his friends; and having put into his mouth a general account of the greatness of God; and the unsearchableness of his ways; now introduces the Divine Being himself, as taking up the same copious argument, and enlarging on several striking particulars in the works of creation and providence, all far exceeding the power and comprehension of man; from which it was to be inferred that his treatment of men was not to be questioned by them. There is much eloquence, and especially sublimity, in some of these descriptions.

2 Who

2 *Who is this that judges in the dark, and whose words are without knowledge.*

4.—7. The sentiment in these verses is that only he who made the world is capable of judging how it ought to be governed.

14. Mr. Norden says that when the corn granary at Grand Cairo is full the inspector, having shut the door puts his seal on a handful of clay, which is used instead of wax.

The meaning of this obscure verse may be, that the earth is managed by God as easily as men manage clay, which takes the impression of any seal. He also changes it with as much ease as men change their garments.

28. *Who is the father of the rain?*

30. *Mazareth* is supposed to mean the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

31. Here the influence of the stars upon the earth seems to be taken for granted. It was a very early opinion, and led the way to idolatry.

32. These are the names of particular constellations, but which of them was intended is uncertain.

34—38. These verses might perhaps be made to follow v. 27; as this division of the speech would close with more propriety and dignity before v. 31—33, which mention the course of the sun, and those constellations which were thought to produce rain, and all the changes of the weather.

36. Schultens translates, *Who put wisdom in wild motions; or who has given to a phenomenon understanding.*

Ch. XXXIX. These speeches of the Divine Being contain a description of several of the more remarkable animals, as his wonderful production, but it might with as much propriety have been put into the mouth of Elihu, or any of the preceding speakers

1. This does not mean mere *knowledge*, but providential care, and protection.

2. This is the *ibex*, which frequents the highest rocks, leaping from one to another. Canst thou number, means canst thou appoint the number.

3. The difficulty with which these animals bring forth their young is noticed by Pliny.

4. They grow up in the desert, which makes their preservation the more wonderful.

5. This is a description of the Zebra, a beautiful animal, but very difficult to be tamed.

9. This according to some is the rhinoceros, a large animal, and of prodigious strength. But Mr. Scott supposes this to be the wild bull of the Syrian and Arabian deserts. The Arabian poets, he says, are full in the description of this animal, and borrow many images from his swiftness, his strength, and the loftiness of his horns. He is exceedingly fierce and untamable.

13. Rather *the wings of the ostrich are triumphantly expanded.*

16. She does not forsake them purposely, but is often driven from them.

Tho' the ostrich may leave her eggs to be hatched in the sand, it does not follow that she deserts them,
or

or that she takes no care of her young when they are hatched.

20. *The strength of his snorting is terrible.*

22. Horses are not naturally courageous, but rather timid. They may, however, with care be trained so as to answer the purpose of the warrior.

22—23. These verses will with more advantage close the description. The others represent the horse as preparing for the battle, these as actually engaged in it.

24. He is represented as rejoicing so much at the approach of a battle, that he will hardly believe that an event so pleasing to him will take place.

26. This language clearly indicates that the questions in this speech do not relate to mere knowledge, but to power and providential care.

Ch. XL. The fourteen first verses of this chapter should undoubtedly be placed, as Mr. Heath first shewed, after the 6th verse of the forty second chapter. Here they interrupt the description of the animals, and there they have a proper place.

4. That is, I am a low contemptible creature, and must submit to the reproof of my maker. He does not, however, say that he was guilty of any crime.

8. Dost thou censure my administration of the affairs of men, as necessary to thy justification?

9. This is a challenge on the part of God, demanding of Job if he could do what was in the power of God only. But this is what Job never pretended to. I therefore do not see the propriety of the sentiment.

15. This is probably the elephant.

M 2

This

This should follow the conclusion of the preceding chapter.

17. By the *tail* Mr. Scott supposes to be meant the organ of generation. The same is thus expressed in other languages.

20. None of these descriptions suit the hippopotamus, but apply well to the elephant,

21—22. The elephant is fond of retiring to marshy and shady places in the heat of the day. He loves the banks of rivers, and standing waters in the deserts.

Ch. XLI. The Leviathan is, no doubt, the crocodile, and as caravans from Arabia frequented Egypt, the Arabs could not but be well acquainted with the productions and the animals of that country.

13. This verse is very obscure, and may be rendered, *who can uncover his mailed face*; alluding to coats of mail on the faces of war horses, which might be taken off; whereas the natural scales on the head of the crocodile could not.

18. The eyes of the crocodile are so remarkable, that the Egyptians make them the hieroglyphic to represent the morning.

21. This is an hyperbolical account of the force with which he draws his breath.

34. Notwithstanding this, men who are accustomed to the visits of crocodiles are not now more afraid of them than of any other animals. They hunt and kill them without difficulty.

Ch. XLII. 6. This verse Dr. Kennicott translates as follows, "Wherefore am I become loathsome, and am scorched up on dust and ashes." This was the very question.

question that he wished to propose to God ; and it does not appear that he ever acknowledged himself to be *vile* in a moral sense, i. e. guilty of any heinous crime. After this verse comes the fourteen first verses of Ch. forty.

7—8. Elihu is neither praised nor censured by the Almighty. He is not commended, because he was, in the main, of the same opinion with Job's three friends concerning the course of providence. Neither is he blamed, because he had not condemned Job as a wicked man, but only reproved him for bad behaviour *towards God* in his afflictions.

7. They had always spoken of God with the greatest reverence. What they were to blame for was their condemning Job as a great sinner merely because he was a sufferer ; so that they formed a wrong judgment of the divine administration. On the contrary Job had maintained that God might afflict even the most innocent.

17. these particular circumstances favour the opinion of there being a foundation in fact for the history of Job, and that only the speeches introduced into the book are the invention of the writer. The work bears no character of divine inspiration, but it is exceedingly curious, as being written in the patriarchal times, as it shews the state of opinions among pious persons, and some oriental customs, with much sublime description both of natural subjects and of the attributes of God, as his infinite power, consummate wisdom, perfect rectitude, and the mysteries of his providence. But the language in which Job expresses his submission to the

M 3

will

will of God in his great affliction, in the historical part of the book, is alone of more value than many volumes. Tho' there is much tautology, and but little of clear reasoning in the work, and tho' there is no great ingenuity, or good judgment, shewn in the conduct of the several speakers, it is of much more value than any writing that the heathen world ever produced.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

P S A L M S.

THIS book is a collection of poetical compositions of a devotional nature, composed by different persons, but chiefly by David, on a variety of occasions, some of which are mentioned in the titles, and others may be discovered by comparing them with the history. But many of them are of a general nature, celebrating the divine perfections and providence, and were sung by the Levites in the temple service. Many of this tribe had no other business besides performing this service, and training others to it. Some sung the words
of

of the psalm, while others accompanied them with instruments of music of various kinds.

These psalms are alone sufficient to shew the infinite superiority of the Hebrew religion to that of the heathens. There are extant many hymns of theirs, composed by the best of their poets, in honour of the heathen gods, but how poor are they, in sentiment and corresponding language, compared with these. The heathens had not the just and the sublime ideas of the power and providence of their gods that the Hebrews had of theirs, and with which it is evident that the minds of pious Israelites were habitually impressed. These psalms were probably collected, and arranged, as we now have them by Ezra.

Ps. I. This psalm is a kind of preface to the whole collection, expressing the duty and the happiness of man, as arising solely from his keeping the commands of God. Happy is the man who does not take evil courses, who at least does not persist in them, and least of all make a mock of religion. There is a beautiful gradation in the expressions, describing different degrees of depravity.

5. Here seems to be a plain reference to a future judgment, such as frequently occur in the book of Ecclesiastes. This doctrine, and that of the resurrection, were familiar to the Jews in our Saviour's time, and therefore must have been known in the time of David, for there was no intermediate revelation on the subject; tho' it must be acknowledged that the references to it are few and obscure. It can never be supposed that this great doctrine, the foundation of all practical religion, should

should have been revealed to the Hebrew nation between the time of David and that of the Maccabees, when it cannot be denied to have been well established, and that there should be no account of the communication. That such doctrines, especially that of the resurrection of the dead at a future period, should have been discovered by man is absolutely impossible. The heathen world knew nothing of it except by obscure and uncertain tradition.

Ps. 11. 1. On the accession of David to the throne of Israel, there was a combination of all the neighbouring powers, except the Tyrians, against him, the Philistines on one hand, and the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites and Syrians on the other, and he conquered them all, and made them tributary to him. On this occasion, no doubt, he composed this psalm. But because it contains many expressions that may without any force be applied to the establishment of christianity, notwithstanding the opposition of all worldly power, and the apostles quote it in this sense, it is thought by many to have been composed in the spirit of prophecy, and that this was its original meaning. But it is not probable that David had any thing in view beyond himself, and his own times.

7. This is explained by the declaration of God to David by Nathan, when, after having subdued all his enemies, he formed the design of building a temple for the national worship, instead of the tabernacle that had been constructed in the wilderness (2 Sam. vii, 14) when he promised to establish the kingdom in his family, and call his son his own son, saying *I will be his*

his father, and he shall be my son. This David applies to himself, Ps. LXXXIX, 26. *He shall cry unto me thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation, And I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth.*

8. This might be inferred from Ps. LXXXIX, 27, just quoted; and tho' it was not literally fulfilled in David himself, it will, no doubt, be so under the Messiah who, is to be descended from him after the return of the Jews from their present dispersion. The kingdom of God, in which the Messiah will preside, is represented by the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which is destined to fall upon, and to break in pieces, the metallic images of Nebuchadnezzar, all the remains of the four great monarchies, and to fill the whole earth.

12. One mode of kissing, especially the knees, the feet, or the garment, was a token of reverence or submission, 1 Kings, xix, 18. *All the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him.* (Hos. xiii, 2) *Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.* To kiss the hand had the same signification as in Job. xxxi, 26—27, *If I beheld the sun when he shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly inticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand.*

Ps. III. From a very early to the latest period of his life, David must have had a pious turn of mind, acknowledging God in all his ways. In the midst of all his difficulties he found a resource in the favour of God,
and

and having had much experience of it, he on this trying occasion expresses the most perfect confidence in it.

Ps. IV. The occasion of this psalm must have been very similar to that of the former, the sentiments being the same in both. He composed this in some season of distress, but with confidence of deliverance. It was given by the author to be recited in the temple-services by the Levites, who were appointed by him for the purpose, to be accompanied with musical instruments, but of what kind is not said:

Ps. V. This psalm, like the two preceding it, seems to have been composed by David in a time of great distress, perhaps in his persecution by Saul, or his son Absalom. He expresses his joyful confidence in God, and his firm persuasion that in due time he would be delivered from all his difficulties. This psalm was to be sung in the temple, accompanied, as the term *Nehiloth* probably signifies, with dances.

7. The Hebrews were directed to worship with their faces towards the temple, where was the symbol of the more immediate presence of God, as the king and governor of the nation. The heathens in general worshipped with their faces towards the East, the sun, which rises in the East, being the principal object of their worship.

Ps. VI. This psalm seems to have been written during some bodily indisposition, of which we have no account in the history of David. It was delivered to the chief musician, or the director of the band of singers in the temple, to be accompanied with music, on an instrument

ment of eight strings, as it is thought the term *Neginoth*, or *Shemnith*, imply.

5. It is plain from this passage that David had no idea of being in a capacity to praise God when he was dead. Death he considered as a state of silence and insensibility. According to the whole tenor of the scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testaments, our capacity for praising God, and of future happiness, will take place at the resurrection of the dead, and not before. Then, and not before, will Christ return, and take all his faithful followers to himself, that where he is, they may be also. In the mean time they are said (1 Thess. iv, 14) to *sleep in Jesus, their life being* (Col. iii. 3. 4.) *as it were hid with Christ in God. But when Christ who is our life shall appear, then, tho' not before, with all his faithful followers appear with him in glory.*

Ps. VII. This psalm was probably composed by David during his persecution by Saul; and the more immediate occasion of it seems to have been some false accusation, perhaps of an intention to take the life of Saul, or to raise a rebellion against him, by one Cush a Benjamite; perhaps a particular adherent of Saul, who was of the same tribe. This composition is intitled *Shiggaion*, which is thought to denote a hymn of consolation.

4. This may allude to his having twice saved the life of Saul when it was in his power, once in the cave of Engaddi, and again when he found him sleeping, and took the spear from his head, without doing him any injury.

11 God

11. God judges the righteous, but is not angry all the day long, or for ever Ps. cxi. 2.

Ps. VIII. This is thought by some to have been a psalm composed by David on his killing Goliath. But there is only one verse that can lead to such an opinion. In general it is a hymn of praise to God for his distinguishing goodness to man, notwithstanding the magnificence of his other works, which at the first view might seem to be more worthy of his attention, and likely to engross it. It is directed to the chief musician upon *Gittith*, but the meaning of the word *Gittith* is altogether uncertain.

2. Our Lord quotes this passage to silence the Scribes and Pharisees, when they were offended at the populace, and the children among the Jews, receiving him on his entrance into Jerusalem with *hosanna*, and other joyful acclamations.

6. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews quotes this passage as a proof that all things were subjected to Christ, who is frequently stiled *the son of man*. But this is not the obvious sense of the passage, and the psalmist by enumerating sheep, oxen, and other brute animals, evidently confines his meaning to mankind in general, to whom God originally gave the dominion over all the other creatures.

In the epistle to the Corinthians the apostle seems to allude to it when he speaks of all things being made subject to Christ by God his father, at the same time that he reminds us who it was that put all things under him, and informs us that at the consummation of all things

things Christ will resign his delegated authority, and God himself will be all in all.

Ps. IX. *Muthlabben* is probably the same with *Alamoth*, and this is thought by some to mean the young women, who joined the band of singers in the temple service.

In this psalm we find David in some distress, of which we have no particular account in his history. On this occasion he recollects former instances of divine appearances in his favour, and expresses a cheerful confidence in God's protection and blessing. Whatever success David met with, he rejoices in God as the author of it and when he is in adversity he humbles himself as under his hand, thus acknowledging God in all his ways. Such sentiments as these occur in almost all the psalms of David, and it is in vain that we look for any such in the most admired compositions of the heathen writers.

Ps. X. The sentiments of this psalm are general, but the occasion on which it was composed was probably particular, tho' it cannot now with any certainty be traced. It expresses the pride and self confidence of the wicked in their prosperity, their utter disregard of God, and their insolence to the righteous. At the same time, however, it expresses the firm confidence of the righteous in the protection of divine providence, and an earnest prayer that God would at length appear more manifestly in their favour.

15. That is, break the power of the wicked, which does not imply any wish of positive evil to them.

Ps. XL.

Ps. XI. This psalm was probably composed by David during his flight from the persecution of Saul. He expresses his firm confidence in the divine favour and protection, rather than in any other means of security that were recommended to him.

3. There is great uncertainty in the interpretation of this passage, of which we probably have not the true original reading. It may mean that if those laws, which are the foundation of all government, be violated, as they probably had been in his case (Saul having promised not to molest him, and yet having broken his promise) there is nothing left on which any man can depend. But God, who knows the injustice, will revenge it.

5. We see here, as on many other occasions, that the word *soul* does not necessarily mean any distinct part of a person, but is synonymous to *himself*. For certainly God is not a compound being, and here and in other places mention is made of the soul of God. But it can only mean God himself. So also when David speaks of his soul, he means only himself; as when, expostulating with himself, he says. Ps. xlii, 11; *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, Why art thou disquieted within me, &c.*

Almost all the ancient versions render this verse *They, i. e. the wicked, have destroyed what thou hast done. They have opposed thy designs. But the righteous, what has he done, what evil is there in him?*

Ps. XII. This psalm was to be sung accompanied with an instrument of eight strings, as the word *Shiminoth* signifies. It seems to have been composed by
David

David in some distress, in which he suffered by the perfidy of professed friends ; but the particular circumstances are not known. He prays that God would appear and confound the insolence of his enemies, and he expresses his expectation that he would do so.

6. Here the *words of the Lord*, probably mean the promises of God in favour of the righteous.

8. The wicked are distressed, and do not know whither to go, when those whom they despised are advanced to honour.

Ps. XIII. The situation of David when he composed this psalm seems to have been similar to that in which he composed the preceeding ; for there is little difference in the sentiments he expresses in them.

Ps. XIV. This psalm is a kind of general complaint of the wickedness of the age, in which good men were oppressed and ridiculed, but was no doubt, composed on some particular occasion ; some suppose during his flight from Absalom.

3. After this verse Paul quotes six others which are not found in our present Hebrew copies, but are in the LXX. See Rom. iii. 10. 11. 12.

7. By *captivity* in this place can only be meant absence from Jerusalem, or in some foreign country, if it was written by David.

Ps. XV. It is not improbable that this psalm was composed by David on some occasion of returning to Jerusalem after the ark of God was there, as in it he describes the happiness of living near to God, and enjoying his favour. We see here the excellent moral object of the Hebrew religion, and how far the Israelites were

were from imagining that their God, like the gods of the heathens, was content with sacrifices and other modes of external worship. With them every thing of this kind was subservient to morals.

5. The Hebrews, not being encouraged in foreign commerce, were not allowed to take any interest for the money they lent to each other, tho' they might for money lent to strangers.

Ps. XVI. In this psalm David, the author of it, expresses in the strongest manner his attachment to the worship of the true God, in opposition to the gods of the neighbouring nations. It seems to have been composed under a sense of some recent instance of the goodness of God to him, and in the full persuasion of the continuance of the protection of his providence.

Ainsworth supposes that *Michtam* signifies golden. A collection of Arabian poems was called *Al Mohahebet* which signifies the same, and they were written in letters of gold. This psalm, then, may have had its title from the same circumstance.

I cannot help thinking also that in the close of it he expresses his confidence in the favour of God even after death. This was certainly the faith of the Jews in our Saviour's time, and therefore probably in that of their oldest ancestors. For we have no account of any revelation of so much importance as that of a general resurrection between the time of David and that of Christ. To account for the firm belief of a doctrine, which could never have been discovered by human reason, appears to me a far greater difficulty than that which arises from

from the want of more frequent references to it in these psalms, and other books of the Old Testament.

4. This may be rendered *tho' their idols be multiplied, or let others multiply their idols, as for me, I will not so much as mention their names, &c.* Un. Hist.

The heathens made great use of blood in the rites of their religion; as in their sacrifices, solemn contracts, consecrations, magical ceremonies, &c. They sometimes partook of the blood of their sacrifices, as feasting together with some of their gods, whose proper food it was supposed to be. *Spencer, p. 614.*

9. Even death will not cut off my hope in God.

10. In the New Testament this is applied to Christ in particular; but it must originally have been meant of David himself, and of all good men without exception. It is evident that David had no expectation of any kind of happiness while he was in the grave. He says, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave.* But it could not be supposed that *souls*, immaterial substances, were confined in the grave along with the dead body. By *soul* therefore he meant himself. *Thou wilt not leave me in the grave.*

Ps. XVII. This psalm seems to have been composed by David under some false charge advanced against him, perhaps at the court of Saul. He appeals to God for his innocence, and expresses his persuasion that he would defend and appear for him.

13. Notwithstanding David's just indignation against his enemies, he never loses sight of this great truth, that a wise and righteous providence overrules all things; and therefore that whatever men may design or do,

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they are only instruments in his hand. With this persuasion he had even the presence of mind to say concerning Shemei, when he was literally reviling him in his distress, *Let him curse, for God has bidden him curse*:

15. In this I cannot help thinking that David expresses his confidence of the divine favour even after death; meaning that let what would befall him in this life, where he had so many enemies, he would acquiesce in it, secure of happiness in the divine favour hereafter:

Ps. XVIII. This psalm appears to have been composed by David when he was fully established in the kingdoms of Judah and all Israel, and also after he had triumphed over all his personal enemies, and those of his nation. His personal enemies were Saul and his adherents, by whom he was cruelly persecuted many years. After he was chosen king in Judah, and reigned in Hebron, which was the chief city in that tribe till the taking of Jerusalem, he had wars with the Philistines, the most inveterate enemies of his nation, and after that with the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, the last of which was then a wealthy and populous nation, who seem to have joined in confederacy with the Amalekites, and Syrians against him.

We have many psalms composed by David during his distresses, but this may be called his *Te Deum*, sung on occasion of his victories. It appears from this that he retained the same pious disposition, ascribing all events to God, both in prosperity and adversity. There is a copy of this psalm, with some variations, in 2 Sam. 22. The composition is truly sublime, abounding with the most striking images, as was shewn in the Notes on that chapter.

12 In

12. in 2. Sam. xxii, 13 it is *coals of fire were kindled*. These words have probably been omitted here by the transcriber so that we should read as follows. *At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed. They kindled into coals of fire.* K.

Ps. XIX. This is a truly excellent composition on a general subject, viz. the instruction that God imparts to man in the works of nature and in his revealed will.

3. Tho' they have no speech, or language, neither is their voice heard, &c.

7. Refreshing the soul.

10. Honey in the comb, with white young bees in it, is in the East reckoned the most delicious eating.

13. Perhaps from the proud, or presumptuous.

Ps. XX. This psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was going on some warlike expedition, and after the ark was removed to Jerusalem. It was, as appears from the title, sung in the temple, and therefore part of it is in the form of a prayer for him. In the course of it David expresses his confidence in the divine protection and assistance.

Ps. XXI. This seems to have been a psalm of thanksgiving after a victory, perhaps in the expedition referred to in the preceding psalm.

Ps. XXII. This psalm is addressed to the chief musician upon *Ajelath Shahar* which means the *hind of the morning*. It was perhaps some particular company of performers so called, but for what reason it is in vain for us to conjecture. It was probably composed by David after his deliverance from some great difficulty, and while the remembrance of it was fresh upon his

mind. The first verse of this psalm was pronounced by our Saviour as he hung on the cross, which has led many persons to think that it was prophetic of his character and situation; and it is not a little remarkable that what David says in a figurative manner of himself was literally true of our Saviour. But this is no proof of any original reference to his case. Its containing sentiments suitable to his situation was sufficient to lead our Saviour, to whom the scriptures were familiar, to repeat it, speaking the first verse aloud, and probably the rest in a lower tone, or only mentally.

9. This was literally fulfilled in our Saviour, whose enemies insulted him in this manner as he hung on the cross.

15. This is the description of a man in extreme torture, in which they always suffer much from thirst.

16. This was only figuratively true of David, but literally of Christ.

18. That is, my enemies consider all my prospects as over, and that every thing that I have will be taken from me, and even my garments divided among them. This he might say without thinking that it would be literally his case. It was so, however, of our Saviour.

25. It is evident from this, that this psalm was composed by David when he was delivered from his troubles, or at least in a firm faith that his sufferings would redound to his advantage, and the glory of his deliverer.

Ps. XXIII. This psalm was probably composed by David after he had been brought out of some distress. All the images are drawn from pastoral life, and David
having

having been a shepherd, they would be familiar to him. Indeed, they are sufficiently so to all persons; agriculture and a pastoral life being the most natural employment of men, and of which most persons have some knowledge.

5. Anointing with oil is peculiarly refreshing in hot climates, tho' offensive in some countries.

Ps. XXIV. This psalm is thought to have been composed by David on the occasion of carrying the ark from the house of Obededom to Jerusalem. We see in it the great moral object of the Hebrew religion, and that it was far from being, like the heathen religions, a system of mere rites and ceremonies. The sentiments of this psalm are exceedingly noble, and there is an air of great sublimity and grandeur through the whole of it.

Ps. XXV. This psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was in great distress on account of some sin that he had committed, and we see in it the most genuine marks of humility and repentance. He confesses his sin without any palliation, and refers himself to the free mercy of God, humbly trusting that this mercy would never intirely forsake him, and that God would still appear for him.

22. This verse is probably an interpolation, as it follows that which begins with the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The same is the case with the last verse of Ps. xxxiv.

Ps. XXVI. This psalm is supposed to have been composed while David was in a state of persecution by Saul, and obliged to conceal himself or take refuge in

a foreign country. He asserts his innocence, and appeals to God who knew his heart, for the truth of his declarations.

6. From this it is thought that the custom of walking in procession round the altar, which the Jews observed in later times, was as ancient as the time of David. The heathens performed the same.

Ps. XXVII. This psalm must have been composed in a situation similar to that in which David composed the preceding, or when he was engaged in a hazardous war, as when he was rescued from the attack of a Philistine giant by Abishai, 2 Sam. xxi, 17. He expresses peculiar satisfaction in the thought of his renewed attendance upon God in the national worship, and strongly recommends confidence in God.

Ps. XXVIII. The sentiments of this psalm are very similar to those in the preceding, and it was therefore probably composed in similar circumstances.

Ps. XXIX. This psalm was probably composed after a storm of thunder and lightning, from which the writer takes occasion in a very solemn language to extol the great power of God.

9. *The voice of the Lord shaketh the oaks, and maketh bare the forests.*

Ps. XXX. This psalm, tho' said to have been composed on the dedication of a house, contains no sentiment appropriate to such an occasion. It is a general acknowledgment of the favour of God to the psalmist, in delivering him from his many troubles.

9. Here we see that, in the idea of David, death is a state of silence and insensibility, not of action or enjoyment.

ment. The best that is ever said of it is that it is a state in which the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. Job iii, 17.

Ps. XXXI. This psalm seems to have been composed by David in part while he was in a state of distress, probably during his persecution by Saul, and especially, as it is thought, in the critical situation described 1 Sam. xxiii, 26, when he fled in haste from him; and in part after his deliverance; for both situations are described.

5. These are the words used by our Saviour in his dying moments, taken probably from this psalm, as the language of the scriptures was familiar to him.

Ps. XXXII. This psalm and twelve others have the word *maschil* in their titles. It signifies *instruction*, or *excellence*. It has probably some relation to the music with which the reciting of it was to be accompanied. It was perhaps a direction to some particular tune, or mode of singing, denoted by that term. It must have been composed rather late in the life of David, as he makes mention of his sins, and the divine favour to him in forgiving them.

4. The word *selah* probably denoted a pause in the music, or the change of one company of performers for another.

8. This is put into the mouth of God, the word *saying* being understood, after the preceding verse.

Ps. XXXIII. This is a most excellent psalm of praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the power and the goodness of God, with respect to the world in general, and the Hebrew nation and himself, as their king, in particular. God's constant attention to the conduct of men,

men, and his regard for virtue, are particularly mentioned. There is nothing like this in any heathen composition.

9. This is an allusion to the Mosaic account of the creation; where it is said that God said, *let there be light, and there was light* &c. every thing being accomplished with perfect ease, as by speaking, and ordering it to be done, and yet without any assistants acting under him.

Ps. XXXIV. This psalm, tho' composed on a particular occasion, as indicated in the title, has nothing but what is of a general nature in its contents. In it David expresses in the strongest terms his sense of the favour of God to him, and he exhorts all good men to put their trust in him, as he had done. This psalm is divided into clauses, each of which begins with a different letter, in the order of the Hebrew alphabet, or so nearly so, that it is probable that it was exactly so originally, or was aimed at in the composition. This arrangement would assist the memory in reciting the psalm; and the same is done in other psalms, and in the lamentations of Jeremiah.

Ps. XXXV. This psalm was probably composed by David during his persecution by Saul, in whose court he had many enemies, who spared no calumnies, or any other ill offices, to injure him. Against these persons he expresses more indignation than we may think becomes a christian, who is taught to *do good to them that hate him, and to pray for them that despitefully use him and persecute him*. But there are several circumstances in the case of David, who appears to have been of a

warm

warm and generous temper, that may be alleged in extenuation of his violence, especially the kind offices he appears to have done to the very persons who used him so ill, which are alluded to in this psalm.

Ps. XXXVI. This psalm was probably composed in the same circumstances with the preceding. It expresses the insolence, folly, and impiety of his enemies, and his own confidence in the divine protection and blessing.

9. The source of all happiness, as well as of life ; *light* being often used to express the joy and satisfaction which arises from virtue and happiness, as *darkness* indicates the contrary, viz. the misery which is the consequence of vice and wickedness.

11. Pride is often used to denote wickedness in general, and humility all the virtues ; no vice being more odious in the sight of God than pride, which is a kind of impiety, affecting as it were an independence on God ; as no virtue is of more value than humility, as implying a trust in God, and not in ourselves.

Ps. XXXVII. There is a fine strain of piety and moral instruction in this psalm. It represents the present and future condition of the righteous and the wicked, and is particularly calculated to prepare the minds of good men for the darkest scenes of providence, in which the wicked seem to prosper, when they are, as it were, neglected and frowned upon. But here the strongest assurances are given that these appearances are deceitful, and only temporary ; for that in the end all the wicked will be punished, and the truly virtuous and pious rewarded. It seems to have been composed with
a view

a view to be committed to memory, as every other verse begins with a new letter of the alphabet, in their proper order.

29. This language seems to have a reference to a future state of this earth, when it will be the inheritance and habitation of good men only. The case is so manifestly otherwise in this life, that it could not have been unknown, or overlooked, by David.

Ps. XXXVIII. The language of this psalm is so highly figurative, that it is not easy to determine on what occasion it was composed. David, the author of it, intitles it a *call to remembrance*, perhaps by way of reminding himself of his former sins and sufferings, when he was afterwards in a state of prosperity. He describes in the most lively manner his great afflictions, but acknowledges the justice of God in visiting him with them; and to his mercy and protection he intirely refers himself.

5. *Folly* is often, in the language of scripture, synonymous to *vice*.

10. It is very possible, tho' we have no account of it in his history, that David had some great sickness, from which his recovery was long doubtful; and that he alludes to it in this place, as well as in some other psalms.

Ps. XXXIX. In this psalm David expresses his resignation to the will of God, under a sense of the ill offices of his enemies, and probably under some sickness, from which he earnestly prays for deliverance. The sentiments of this psalm are exceedingly proper for funeral occasions. *Jeduthun*, to whom this psalm was delivered

delivered, was one of three directors of the music in the national worship. See 1 Chron. xxv, 1.

1. He wished to give his enemies no pretence for reproaching him.

8. That is, from pain, sickness, and death, which are represented as occasioned by sin.

Ps. XL. In this psalm David expresses his gratitude to God, for some deliverance, the circumstances of which are not mentioned, and his confidence in the divine protection with respect to other difficulties in which he was still involved, notwithstanding his sins, which he was sensible must have exposed him to the divine displeasure. He mentions, however, with much satisfaction, his general integrity, and his zeal in the cause of virtue and of God.

6. That is, obedience is preferable to sacrifice. When a Hebrew voluntarily became a slave for life the magistrate thrust an awl through his ear, and probably into the parts of the door of the master's house, to denote his being now inseparably attached to it. To this custom there seems to have been an allusion in this place. The meaning is, not that God did not refuse sacrifices, but that he preferred moral duties to them. It was the Hebrew mode of making a comparison. Thus when it is said Mal. i, 3, that God *loved Jacob and hated Esau*, the meaning only is, that he preferred Jacob to Esau, or rather the posterity of Jacob to that of Esau.

That is, I am ready to obey thy call, as the written law requires that I should be. This expression the author of the epistle to the Hebrews puts into the mouth of Christ, whose obedience to the will of God was most exemplary

exemplary, and who might, therefore, be supposed to adopt it. But the words were originally those of David only, and they were strictly applicable to his case.

Ps. XLI. This psalm, like many others, seems to have been composed on some particular occasion, and to allude to some part of the history of David of which we have no account. He had probably been near dying of some sickness, which his enemies, and especially some whom he had thought to have been his friends, hoped would have carried him off. He, therefore, praises a compassionate disposition, and expresses his indignation at the conduct of his enemies ; hoping that God would not leave him in their hands.

9. This passage our Saviour applies to his own case, John xiii, 18. when, speaking of the treachery of Judas, he says, *That the scripture might be fulfilled, which says, he that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me.*

13. This is the end of the first of the five books into which the Jews have divided these psalms.

Ps. XLII.—XLIII. These two psalms were originally but one Conj. L. confirmed by a MS.

Tho' these are not called psalms of David, they were probably composed by him in his flight from the pursuit of Abfalom, in which he was driven into the countries mentioned in it, at a distance from the place of the national worship, in which he seems to have taken much pleasure, as indeed the order he introduced into that service, and the many psalms he composed for it, abundantly prove.

5 This

5. This is repeated in this psalm, and again in the following, which may be considered as a continuation of it. It is the language of genuine piety, implying that there is nothing to fear while we are at the disposal of God. The congregation perhaps joined in this, as in a chorus.

7. This is perhaps an allusion to the general deluge, in which were two sources of water, one in the clouds, and the other the great abyss. Those are here represented as calling to one another to unite in overwhelming David.

Ps. XLIV. This psalm does not seem to have been composed by David, because his country was not in the low and oppressed state that is here represented in any part of his reign. David was successful in all his wars. By him the Philistines were completely subdued, and all the neighbouring nations were tributary to him. But this psalm was composed in a very different state of things. Still, however, the author of it humbly expostulates with God, and expresses his hope that in his due time he would appear for his people, especially as they had not deserted his worship. It may suit the time of Hezekiah, when the country suffered by the Assyrians. But tho' the nation kept up the worship of God in his reign, idolatry had been much practised in several of the preceeding reigns, and there is not in this psalm the acknowledgment of it that might have been expected. The nation never suffered much on any other account.

11. Many of the people had been driven from their
habitation.

habitations, and had fled into other countries on the invasion of the Assyrians.

21. This is a bold appeal to God for their strict adherence to his worship, which suits but ill to any part of the history of the Israelites before or after the division of the country into two kingdoms.

Ps. XLV. This psalm was probably composed on the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of the king of Egypt. Many persons tho' without sufficient reason, have thought it had a reference to the Messiah. *Shoshannim* in the title probably signifies a song of joy, for such are all the psalms that have the same title.

3. In the East the blades of swords are made very broad, and when persons ride they put them under their thigh. The Turks do so at this day.

5. This might be said on the presumption that Solomon would be a warlike prince, as almost all the kings of those times were.

6. Rather *God is thy throne*, it is he that gives thee a throne and dominion, and upholds thee in it. This is applied to Christ by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews.

9. The attendants upon the queen at her marriage. Instead of aloes, which have a disagreeable smell, it should probably be *santal wood*, which is in great request in the East on account of its pleasant flavour.

10. Her father's house means Egypt.

11. That is, shew him due reverence and respect.

13. She was beautiful in her person, independently of her dress and ornaments.

14 It

14. It is the custom in the East to fliew the bride to the bride groom in a variety of rich and ornamental dresses.

16. Her pleasure was before in her father's family, but from this time it would be in her own.

Ps. XLVI. This psalm seems to have been composed as a song of praise after a victory, and probably one of the many that were obtained by David over his numerous enemies at the beginning of his reign. It was sung in the national worship by a chorus of women. On these occasions particularly women exerted themselves. They did not fight, but their songs animated and rewarded those that did. This psalm is much better adapted to the occasion than the *Te Deum* that is sung in christian countries on similar occasions.

3. In the greatest agitation of the world, Jerusalem will be in peace, watered by a gentle stream from a neighbouring fountain.

8. *Ivory palaces* may mean little boxes in which precious things were kept, made in the form of houses.
MERRICK.

Ps XLVII. This psalm was perhaps composed on the conveyance of the ark to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, or on occasion of some victory, like the preceding psalm.

9. The LXX has, *the powerful in the earth*, and the Chaldee *the territory of the earth is the Lords*.

Ps. XLVIII. It is uncertain by whom, or on what occasion, this psalm was composed. The most probable conjecture is, that it was written by Jehoshaphat, on occasion of his victories over the many enemies by whom

whom he had been assailed, and when they had been in hopes of taking even Jerusalem itself, but from which they were driven with disgrace. It discovers a fine strain of piety, and confidence in the divine protection.

7. As the East wind occasions a shipwreck of the strongest vessels, so the power of God disperses and destroys our enemies. A fleet of Jehoshaphat was destroyed in this manner, 2 Chron. xx, 37.

XLIX. This psalm is of a moral and general nature, calculated to justify the ways of God to men, in the unequal distribution of the goods of this life; representing the exaltation of the wicked as confined to this state, and that all their power cannot exempt them from death; whereas God will either deliver the righteous, or they will have hope in death.

5. Read, *the iniquity of those that supplant me*:

This may be rendered *the iniquity of my liers in wait*, meaning Saul, or some other enemy of David.

14. This, *I cannot help thinking*, refers to the morning of the resurrection, when the righteous poor shall have the advantage over the rich who were wicked.

15. This, no doubt, may be understood of deliverance from death; but as it may also refer to a happy resurrection, and this is most agreeable to the general sentiment of the psalm, I prefer it. He had before said that wise men die as well as the fools, and why should he expect an exemption in his particular case.

18. Or,

18. Or what good, what solid lasting good, has he done to himself.

Ps. L. This is a psalm not of David, but of Asaph; tho' perhaps not the Asaph who was cotemporary with David, and called *the sweet singer of Israel*, but one who lived in the time of the later kings of Judah. There is a peculiar sublimity in the composition of this psalm, and it is very similar to the style of Isaiah and some other of the prophets, reproving the people, not for idolatry, but for their hypocrisy, and their insincerity in the worship of God. It represents all external worship as insignificant, when compared with that of the heart and a good life.

6. There is such express mention of a judgment to come in the writings of Solomon, as well as of David, a judgment that shall be equitable and decisive, distinguishing the righteous from the wicked, which is in many places acknowledged not to be done in this life, that it is far the most natural to suppose that they looked for it in another, and that this is what is referred to in this place.

14. How far is this language from encouraging superstition, and how superior in this most important respect was the religion of the Hebrews to that of the heathens.

Ps. LI. The occasion of this psalm was a transaction in the life of David the most memorable, but the most disgraceful, in his whole history, viz. his debauching the wife of one of his bravest and most faithful servants, and afterwards contriving his death to prevent his knowing it. We can only say that his repentance

was as exemplary as his crime was great. This psalm was one of those that were directed to be sung in the national worship, by which means his shame and remorse would be as public as his crime.

5. This is only a proverbial expression to denote a grievous offender. It was used by the rulers of the Jews to the man who had been born blind. John ix, 34, *Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us.* Had David been born with any evil dispositions, it would have been an extenuation of his crimes; whereas this is evidently mentioned as an aggravation of them. That the nature of man was changed after the fall is far from being probable. If the natural disposition of Adam had been better than that of his descendants, why did he not resist temptation more effectually than he did? Who of his posterity could have shewn greater weakness than both he and his wife?

11. This probably refers to the particular communication he had had from God, both when he had consulted the oracle in the manner prescribed in the writings of Moses, and by his prophets, if not to himself immediately.

14. This evidently alludes to the murder of Uriah, which was as properly committed by David, as if it had been done by his own hand.

17. We see here how far the intelligent Hebrews were from trusting in their ceremonial observances for the pardon of any offence of a moral nature. Their ground of confidence was the same with ours, the free mercy of God, extended to all true penitents; which
mercy

mercy arises from the divine benevolence, which is essential to the divine nature:

Ps. LII. A more particular account of that part of the history of David which gave occasion to the composition of this psalm will be found 1 Sam. xxii, where we read that this Doeg, who was an Edomite, thinking to ingratiate himself with Saul, gave him information concerning those priests who favoured David; in consequence of which Saul put to death all of them that he met with at Nob, Abiathar only escaping. In this psalm David shews the little cause there was for triumphing in such successes as these, and that the judgments of God would certainly overtake such workers of iniquity. At the same time he expresses his thankfulness to God for his deliverance, and his confidence in his future protection and favour.

Ps. LIII. This psalm is almost word for word the same with the fourteenth, which was probably composed by David on his success against some of his enemies who had distinguished themselves by their impiety. This was, therefore, probably copied with some alterations on a similar occasion, and directed to be sung in the national worship accompanied with music and dancing, as the term *Mahalath* seems to denote. It expresses the folly of those who impiously opposed him, and his joy in the deliverance which he was confident God would work out for him.

6 The word *captivity* is not necessarily to be understood in the literal sense of the word, tho' many persons no doubt, had been driven into other countries during

the oppression of the Philistines in the latter part of the reign of Saul, but may denote calamity in general.

Ps. LIV. We have an account of that part of the history of David to which this psalm relates in 1 Sam. xxiii. The inhabitants of Ziph, in whose neighbourhood David secreted himself from the persecution of Saul, informed that king concerning him, and promised their aid in apprehending him. David was saved at this time by a formidable invasion of the Philistines.

3. The word *strangers* is not perhaps in this place to be understood literally, of a foreign nation, but of enemies in general, tho' it is possible that the inhabitants of this town of Ziph might not be Israelites, but people of other nations. It was in the South East part of the country allotted to the tribe of Judah, and therefore bordered on the Edomites.

Ps. LV. This psalm was probably composed by David on the defection of Ahitophel, his former friend and counsellor, in the rebellion of Absalom. This was a very alarming conspiracy, and broke out so suddenly, that David was obliged to fly from Jerusalem with great precipitation, altogether unprepared to defeat the well concerted measures of his ambitious son. Notwithstanding this unpromising situation of his affairs, David expresses his confidence in the divine favour and he encourages all pious persons to have the same.

17. This custom of praying three times every day we find to have been observed by pious Jews in later times, as by Daniel at Babylon, and Peter at the house where he lodged in Joppa.

Ps.

Ps. LVI. The words *Jonath Elim Rehokim* in the title of this psalm are variously rendered by the authors of the ancient versions. Aben Ezra supposes that they were the first words of a well known song, to the tune of which this psalm was directed to be sung. Calmet thinks it was a company of musicians that was so called. But as *Jonath Elim* may signify a *silent dove*, and *Rehokim*, *persons at a distance*, it is conjectured by others that they allude to a dove silently wandering from place to place; and it was after wandering to several places that David fled to Gath, where he thought it necessary for his safety to counterfeit madness. After this he wandered to other places, and when he was at rest, or perhaps while he was at Gath, he composed this psalm, in which he complains of the persecution of his enemies, but expresses his faith in the divine protection.

8. It is probable that the Jews, and other orientals, had the custom which the Romans had, of putting tears into small vessels provided for the purpose, called *ampullæ*, or *urnæ lacrymales*. They were placed upon the sepulchres of deceased friends, as a memorial of the sorrow of the survivors.

13. According to the antient versions this verse ought to be rendered, *Thou hast delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling.*

Ps. LVII. *Altashith* is in the title of four psalms, but the meaning of it is very uncertain, tho' there can be little doubt that, like the others, it had some relation to the music. David composed this psalm in a situation very similar to that in which he composed the preceding

ceding. He expresses the same confidence in the divine favour, and in more sublime language praises God for his deliverance.

1. He was confident that he should see the end of all his troubles, and so may every man equally conscious of integrity.

9. Tho' driven from his native country, as at this time he was, he would not cease to acknowledge and praise his own God.

Ps. LVIII. This psalm probably relates to some consultation in the court of Saul, in which his death was determined upon. He, therefore, expresses his indignation against his enemies in very strong terms, such as it hardly becomes christians to make use of; but withal his confidence in the divine protection. This he doubts not would appear in the destruction of his enemies, and his own happy deliverance, as an encouragement to all good men to put their trust in God in similar circumstances.

8. Thou wilt dissolve them like wax. So the LXX, and other antient versions.

Ps. LIX. The sentiments expressed in this psalm are the same with those which David composed in similar situations of personal danger. He had no doubt of his final deliverance, and that God would punish all his enemies, in which he rejoices perhaps too much.

5. I do not see the propriety of David making mention of foreign nations, with which at this time he had no concern, unless Saul had engaged some of them not to receive him in his flight.

6 In

6. In the East dogs are no persons property, but run about howling in companies, especially in the night wherever they can find victuals.

O my fortress to thee will I look.

Ps. LX. When David was settled in the peaceable possession of the kingdom of all Israel, the Edomites, Syrians, and other neighbouring nations seem to have united to crush him. But he soon triumphed over them all. It was in the course of these wars, especially with the Syrians, called *Aram*, that this psalm was composed. He begins with the mention of the preceding distressed state of the country, but expresses his confident hope of success through the protection and assistance of God.

2. This may allude to what the country had suffered both in the wars with the Philistines in the time of Saul, and the civil war between himself and Ishbosheth.

6. He had gained those parts of the country, and would give the command of them to such of his officers as he thought proper. Those places being in the land of Canaan he could not consider them as a conquered country.

7. All Ephraim and Manasseh, which were the principal of the ten tribes which did not acknowledge him at the first, did so now, after he had reigned ten years over Judah. Moab and Edom he considered as a certain conquest, and the Philistines, being already subdued, would join him in his war with all the other nations; but the antient versions have *Over Philistia will I triumph.*

Ps. LXI. This psalm was probably composed by David after his success against his son Absalom. It begins with his language in the time of his distress, but ends in a strain of praise and exultation.

5. Rather, *Thou hast given inheritance to those that fear thy name.*

6. It is probable from David here calling himself *king*, that this was no deliverance that he had obtained in the time of Saul. Tho' having been anointed by Samuel to reign after the death of Saul, he might call himself king by way of anticipation.

Ps. LXII. In this psalm David alludes to some deliverance from his enemies, ascribing it to God as its proper cause, and exhorting others to confide in him in similar circumstances, and not in any other means of safety, and least of all to have recourse to any unlawful means.

Ps. LXIII. This psalm was composed by David when he fled from Saul. For in his flight from the pursuit of Absalom, he took another direction, flying beyond the river Jordan, out of the bounds of Judah. He particularly regrets his absence from the national worship, in which he appears to have taken great delight. He expresses the most perfect confidence in the favour of God, and the destruction of all his enemies.

11. He must have called himself *king* by way of anticipation at this time.

Ps. LXIV. There is nothing in the sentiments of this psalm but what is common to many others. It represents David beset by the calumnies and secret machinations

nations of his enemies, but expressing his confidence that God would confound all their devices ; so that his history would be an encouragement to all pious persons to put their trust in God in all situations equally perilous and unpromising.

Ps. LXV. From the beginning of this psalm it should seem that David had been in some distress before he composed it, and that he had been at a distance from the place of the national worship, but on what occasion does not appear. He expresses, however, his trust in God, and his thankfulness for some interposition in his favour. From the latter part of this psalm it appears that his distress, or that of the country, had been heightened by a long continued drought, and a famine occasioned by it. As he particularly mentions the goodness of God in giving rain to make the earth fruitful again, it might be termed a psalm, or song, for an abundant harvest.

5. The LXX has, *wonderful in righteousness, answer us, &c.*

9. The *river of God* may mean a large river, or a plentiful supply of water from any source.

13. This personification of the face of nature is in the true spirit of poetry, and these images are peculiarly pleasing.

Ps. LXVI. A great proportion of the psalms in the preceding part of this collection are composed in a mournful strain, and represent the author of them in circumstances of distress, but still trusting in God as the sovereign disposer of all things. We now see the same
pious

pious mind in prosperity, triumphing over all his enemies, and preserving the same regard to God and his providence as in times of distress.

This psalm was probably composed by David, if it was composed by him, on his firm establishment on the throne of Israel, and after he had subdued all his enemies, especially the Philistines, who had forely oppressed the country many years in the time of Samuel and Saul. Nothing could have been more grievous than this oppression had sometimes been. For we read, 1 Sam. xiii, 19. *There was no smith in all the land of Israel, lest they should make swords or spears, but all the Israelites carried their axes, and every instrument of husbandry, to the Philistines to be sharpened.*

From this abject state of servitude the country was raised to independence and glory by the spirit and ability of David. No country was so effectually served by any man, as that of David was by him. If any man, therefore, had reason to glory in himself, he had. But with the same piety with which he put his trust in God in his adversity, in which school he had been well trained, he ascribes all his great victories to God. And God being the author of nature, he is no less the proper cause of all the events which take place according to the established laws of it, than he is of those in which his hand is, to less discerning eyes, more apparent.

12. *A place of refreshment*, according to the antient versions.

Ps. LXVII. It is not improbable that this psalm consists of the solemn benediction which David pronounced

nounced upon the people, when, as we read 2 Sam. vi. 17, *he blessed them in the name of the Lord of Hosts*, on bringing the ark of God to Jerusalem. For no sentiment or mode of address could be more proper for the occasion.

2. Tho' the Hebrew ritual, and their religion in general, was in many respects peculiar to one nation, and was not designed to be adopted by any other; yet the great object of it was a display of the perfections and government of God to the whole world, that on this particular theatre God might, as it were, manifest himself to all nations; and Palestine was well situated for this purpose, being surrounded by all the civilized nations then existing, as the Egyptians, Tyrians, Syrians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, Persians, and Arabians, to say nothing of the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, who, however, were all powerful nations in their time. Greece and Rome were then unknown.

Ps. LXVIII. This is a general hymn of praise to God, sung with music and dancing during the removal of the ark to Jerusalem.

1 These were the words that Moses pronounced whenever the ark was taken up in the wilderness, to be carried to any other place, Num. x, 35. It is probable, therefore, that with these words David began the hymn, accompanied with music and dancing, with the recital of which the ark was carried by the priests.

8. Complete this from Jud. v, 4. then *The mountains melted at the presence of Jehovah, even Sinai, &c. K.*

9 *Rain*

9. *Rain* may signify *refreshment* in general, or blessings of any kind, nothing being more acceptable than rain in such a wilderness as the Israelites travelled through.

11. This alludes to the victories in the battles which by particular divine direction were fought in the time of Moses, when mention is made of part of the plunder being given to those who were not engaged in the fight.

13. There is much obscurity in this verse, and it is rendered by the ancients and moderns very differently. I see little probability in any of them. It may be an allusion to the squalid appearance they made in Egypt, and the splendid one that they made afterwards.

14. They appeared white as snow.

16. This is in praise of Zion, an eminence in Jerusalem, whither the ark was carried. Other hills had little reason to leap, or be joyful, compared to this, in which God would reside.

17. This seems to be an allusion to the triumph of the Israelites over all their enemies, in which he represents them assisted by all the host of heaven.

18. The Syriac and Arabic versions, have, *the rebellious shall not dwell before the Lord.*

27. The procession in which the ark was carried was formed of the heads of all the tribes, the principal of which are here mentioned.

29. The place of the divine residence seems to be called *a temple* before that which was built by Solomon. The temporary one raised by David for the reception of the ark might be no contemptible structure.

30 This

30. This verse is thus translated by a friend of bishop Lowth, *Consume the wild beast of the reed, the multitude of those who are strong in the calves of the nations, who excite themselves with fragments of silver.* By the wild beast of the reed he understands the hippopotamus, which lives among the reeds of the Nile. The Egyptians were remarkable for the worship of calves, and by fragments of silver he understands the small pieces of silver round a timbrel. Dr. Jubb renders this *who dance to the sound of the sistrum* as the Egyptians did.

Ps. LXIX. In this psalm David appears in deep affliction, complaining of his many enemies, against whom he intreats the anger of God in a manner that a christian will hardly approve. There is, however, upon the whole, an excellent spirit of true piety, and the most admirable resignation to the will of God in this, as in all his psalms. God was *in all his thoughts*, in prosperity, and in adversity. And this is the great end of religion, and the perfection of human character, which we should all aim at who live under the government of God, and are persuaded that he sees and attends to every thing, ordering all that comes to pass, and every thing for the best of purposes.

21. This is quoted as applicable to the case of Christ as he hung upon the cross, John xix, 28. But the vinegar given to David was to disappoint and mortify him, whereas what was given to Christ was probably such beverage as the Roman soldiers commonly used, and was meant for his refreshment. The *gall* should have been rendered *hemlock*, a poisonous plant.

Ps:

Ps LXX. This psalm is supposed by some to have been separated from the fortieth, to which it seems to have been a continuation. In it David appears in great distress, but still trusting in God, and confident that he would appear for him, to the confusion of his enemies, and the encouragement of all the pious and devout.

Ps. LXXI. This psalm was probably composed by David when he was distressed by the rebellion of his son Absalom: for he appears to have been old, as well as in great trouble, when he wrote it. Notwithstanding this, with the same spirit of piety which appears in all his psalms, and with an inward consciousness of his integrity, he expresses his unshaken confidence in the favour and protection of God, and that by him he would finally be delivered from all his troubles.

Ps. LXXII. This psalm was probably composed by David on the coronation of his son Solomon, if he be not supposed to have been too old for so noble a composition. He prays for the happy reign of his son, and in the spirit of prophecy predicts it.

11. By *all nations* it is not necessary to understand more than the same neighbouring nations which had been conquered by David.

Ps. LXXIII. This psalm is the beginning of the third division of this collection of sacred poems, and contains seventeen, only one of which appears to be the composition of David. The rest are generally ascribed to Asaph, either him of that name in the time of David, or another about the time of Hezekiah, when the country was much reduced in consequence of the idolatry and bad conduct of several of its kings. The sub-
ject

ject of this psalm was not any particular event, but the vindication of the providence of God in the prosperity of the wicked, at which the author represents himself as much staggered at first ; but he was relieved by considering that their prosperity was only for a season, and that in due time God would appear to give to every man according to his works. This, however, must necessarily have been advanced with a view to a future state. For the author of this psalm expressly speaks of the death of the wicked as triumphant, and enviable. Their punishment, therefore, must come afterwards.

10. This verse is obscure, but some circumstance favourable to the wicked must be intimated in it. It may be the people flock to him, and find plenty of water, or great prosperity, under him.

15. I betray the cause of virtue and of God, by this impatient language.

17. When I consider the maxims of God's government, as laid down in his word, which I called to mind in attending the national worship.

26. This language, surely, implies hope in death, and not merely in affliction.

Ps. LXXIV. This psalm said to be a composition of Asaph, was probably composed during the captivity at Babylon, as there are in it allusions to the destruction of the temple. It is a lamentation over the wretched state of the country of Judah, and contains an earnest prayer to God that he would restore it to its former state.

4. They set up trophies of their victories.

6 When

6. When the temple was building, men vied with each other in cutting down timber for the use of it, but now their enemies vie with each other who shall do the most to demolish it, when the timber had been cut and carved in the most curious manner, as it was in the temple of Solomon.

7. This can hardly be understood of any thing besides the destruction of the temple of Solomon by Nebuchadnezzar.

8. They have not only destroyed the temple at Jerusalem, but every place set apart for the purpose of religion through the country. From this it is probable that there were some buildings appropriated to the reading of the law and prayer among the Hebrews before the Babylonish captivity, tho' they might not be regulated in the same manner as the synagogues were afterwards. The societies called the *sons of the prophets* could not well have been without some place of general concourse; and it is probable that on the Sabbaths, new moons, and other occasions, the people resorted to them for instruction.

9. This was probably the case in Judea, tho' Daniel and Ezekiel were at this time in Chaldea.

The word rendered *dragon* is supposed to mean the *tunnie*, a species of whale, with which the psalmist was probably acquainted.

14. The dividing of the Red Sea, and the destruction of the princes of Egypt, are here intimated by the destruction of sea monsters.

15. This is an allusion to the passage through the river Jordan.

17. That

17. That the power of God is the same now that it was in any former time, is evident from the uniformity of nature, which is conducted by him.

19. Turtle doves are remarkable for their doleful notes, and therefore the people of God are here compared to them.

20. All the land of Judah, even the most obscure corners of it, were infested with banditti, who plundered it, there being no good government in the country.

Ps. LXXV. This psalm is thought by some to have been composed on the deliverance of the kingdom of Judah from the invasion of Senacherib king of Assyria. However, it expresses a strong sense of the divine protection, and a determination in the author to punish the wicked and reward the righteous, and therefore must have been composed by, or in the name of, the king.

2. This verse is supposed by some to contain the words of God, expressing the object and end of his government; but they render it *when I shall have gained the appointed time*, i.e. when the proper time shall come. Others suppose them to be the declarations of Hezekiah concerning his fixed resolution to complete the reformation of the country, on the retiring of the king of Assyria.

5. The governors of provinces in Abyssinia, Mr. Bruce says, carry a horn, or a conical piece of silver, about four inches long, tied with a fillet upon their foreheads on public occasions. Lest it should fall forward they walk with a stiff neck; and to this custom or one like it, there seems to be an allusion in this place.

Ps. LXXVI. This psalm is supposed to have been composed by Asaph in the reign of Hezekiah, on his victory over Senacherib king of Assyria; and in some copies of the Greek version it is said to have that title.

2. Salem means Jerusalem.

4. Places where beasts of prey and bands of robbers resorted.

10. All the violences that man can be guilty of shall be found to answer the excellent purposes of God's providence, and the rest shall be restrained.

12. He will shorten the lives of princes.

Ps. LXXVII. This psalm was composed in a time of national distress, probably the reign of Hezekiah, or perhaps on the Babylonish captivity. The author, however, puts his confidence in God, especially on the consideration of what he had formerly done for the people of Israel.

10. It is a weakness, a criminal distrust of providence, as a review of what he had formerly done for his people will shew.

13. Rather, as in some ancient versions, *All thy ways are holy.*

15. That is, from their bondage in Egypt.

16. This alludes to their passage through the Red Sea.

18. This may allude to those battles in which the Israelites were assisted by thunder, lightning, and hail, in subduing their enemies.

19. This probably refers to the mysteriousness of the ways of providence in general, which are as difficult

10

to trace by men as footsteps in the water, which immediately closes upon them.

Ps. LXXVIII. The Israelites were enjoined by Moses and their prophets to keep up the remembrance of all the great things that God had done for their nation, and make them familiar to their thoughts, that they might never want motives to obedience, that they might take warning by the examples of disobedience, and receive encouragement from those of the pious. The song of Moses, and several of the psalms, were composed with this view ; and being in verse they might be the more easily committed to memory, and repeated without variation. This is a psalm of this kind, being historical, and comprizing all the great events of the Old Testament history, from the bondage in Egypt to the time of David, in whose reign it was probably composed by that Asaph who is called the sweet singer of Israel.

9. This may refer to the time when Moses sent spies in order to their immediate taking possession of the land of Canaan ; when even the tribe of Ephraim, tho' renowned for their valour, and afterwards the chief of the ten that formed a separate kingdom, were discouraged, and did not venture to proceed.

18. They were not content with the manna that God had provided for them.

25. What came immediately from heaven might be supposed to have been the food of angels. But as the word in the original is no where else translated *angels*, it may mean *oxen*, which they had to eat, and the fol-

P 2

lowing

lowing word signifies *food procured by hunting*, with which the wilderness was not unprovided.

27. They were fed with quails, when they murmured for the want of flesh meat.

33. They were detained forty years in the wilderness till all those who had left Egypt, and were grown to man's estate, were dead, except Caleb and Joshua.

41. They questioned his power on some occasions.

43. Zoan was probably the residence of the kings of Egypt at that time.

44. Here the psalmist begins to enumerate the several plagues of Egypt.

49. Whatever it be that God employs, either as a proper messenger, or in any other way, to effect his purpose, is, in the language of scripture, called *his angel*. Thus he is said Ps. civ, 4, to have made the winds his angels, and flames of fire his ministers.

54. This may signify *Shiloh*, or mount Zion in Jerusalem, where the ark then was. It means the place of the national worship.

66. This seems to allude to the plagues of hæmorrhoids, with which the Philistines when they took the ark captive were afflicted.

67. The ark had been at Shiloh, which was in the tribe of Ephraim.

Ps. LXXIX. This psalm was probably composed during the Babylonish captivity, after the great desolation of the country, and the destruction of the temple, which are evidently referred to in it. It is an earnest prayer to God that he would have compassion on his people, and avenge them on their adversaries, lest they should

should boast of his inability to relieve them; a sentiment which occurs frequently in this book of psalms.

Ps. LXXX. This psalm, like the preceding, must have been composed in a time of national calamity, but probably not the same. On the whole, it seems best to suit the time of Hezekiah, when the Assyrians invaded both Israel and Judah, and carried the former into captivity.

2. Do thou, who formerly appearedst in favour of the patriarch Joseph, now appear in favour of his posterity, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, as well as that of Benjamin, which was joined to Judah; but lying to the North of it was more exposed to the invasion of the Assyrians.

The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin, were encamped, and marched next to the ark in the wilderness, being ranged on the three sides of it, that of Judah being in the front.

8. This is a beautiful allegory, which is much enlarged on in the prophet Isaiah, who perhaps composed this psalm.

13. This may allude to the kings of Assyria.

15. *The branch* may refer to king Hezekiah.

Ps. LXXXI. This psalm was probably composed for the national worship at the feast of tabernacles, when the new year, according to the ancient method of computing time, and which was still used by the Hebrews for civil purposes, began with the blowing of trumpets, and other marks of festivity. At this season of the year the tabernacle was erected in the wil-

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derness,

derness, the temple dedicated by Solomon, and the national worship resumed after the Babylonish captivity.

The design of this psalm is to remind the Israelites of the favour that God had shewn to their ancestors, in delivering them from their bondage in Egypt, and in distinguishing them from all other nations, by giving them the law. It also reminds them of the apostacy of the nation afterwards, and the sufferings to which they exposed themselves on that account.

Ps. LXXXII. This psalm was probably composed by that Asaph who lived in the reign of Hezekiah, in which, tho' the public worship of God was restored, many abuses remained, especially in the courts of judicature, to which there is an evident allusion. The corrupt state of things in other respects seems to have been much the same with that which Isaiah complains of. This psalm is a solemn warning to corrupt magistrates.

1. The *mighty* may mean princes, or magistrates, any persons invested with power.

5. This may allude to truth and justice, which are the foundation of all good government, and the only security of a state.

6. Magistrates might be called *gods* on account of their power. Thus Moses is called a god with respect to Pharaoh. This passage is quoted by our Saviour in answer to the Jews, who censured him for calling himself the son of God.

Ps. LXXXIII. This psalm is supposed to have been composed by one of the descendants of Asaph, of whom

we

we have no certain account. Perhaps it was Jahaz, on whom the spirit of God came, and who was of the sons of Asaph (2 Chron. xx, 14) on occasion of the conspiracy of the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations against Jehosaphat, mentioned 2 Chron. xx. It represents the country as in a state of great danger, and contains an earnest supplication to God, that he would appear in favour of his people as in former times.

13. Instead of *a wheel*, it should be any thing that rolls, or is easily moved. In Is. xvii, 13, this word is in the margin rendered *thistle down*.

Ps. LXXXIV. This psalm was composed either by David, or some other person who was at a distance from the tabernacle or temple, and who earnestly longed to join in the worship of it.

3. Bochart supposes the word here rendered *sparrow* to mean the *ring dove*, or *wild pigeon*, which sometimes makes its nest in high buildings.

5. Whose heart is in the way to the place of the national worship, tho' he could not attend there in person.

6. Who passing through the vale of Baca, where there is no water, travel with as much pleasure as if it abounded with water and all other refreshments.

7. From stage to stage on their journey. It may allude to the stations of travellers, which were generally chosen near to places where water was easily procured.

9. On David, or some other anointed king.

Ps. LXXXV. This psalm, literally interpreted, can only suit the case of the Jews after their return from

the Babylonish captivity. But supposing the language of it to be figurative, it may suit the case of David, or Hezekiah, after some of their troubles, figuratively called a captivity. The author of it expresses his grateful sense of the goodness of God, the justice of his punishments, and an exhortation not to deserve such indignation any more.

10. This is a highly poetical and beautiful expression, denoting perhaps that truth, or fidelity on the part of man, and mercy on the part of God (and in the latter clause that righteousness on the part of man, and peace and prosperity from God) meet together ; the one being the cause of the other.

11. When men do their part in the exercise of truth and other virtues, God will not fail to do his, in righteousness, or faithfully, rewarding them for it.

Ps. LXXXVI. In this psalm David is represented in some distress ; and, as in his persecution by Saul, he expresses his confidence in God, and his hope in his favour.

11. This may be rendered, *My heart will rejoice in fearing thy name.*

16. This is by some rendered *the son of thy truth.*

Ps. LXXXVII. It is not easy to ascertain the time, or the author, of this psalm, but it must have been after Babylon became famous, as mention is made of that city in it. The subject of it is the praise of Jerusalem.

4. Rahab means Egypt.

5. As many made their boast of being natives of other cities of note, so it would be said, in commendation

tion of particular persons, that they were born in Jerusalem.

7. Or all that dwell in thee will sing with the dancers.

Ps. LXXXVIII. This Heman was probably a descendant of Zerah, mentioned 1 Chron. ii, 6, as likewise Ethan, the author of the next psalm, but in what time he lived is uncertain, perhaps during the Babylonish captivity. He bewails his private distress, in which he seems to have suffered by unjust and cruel imprisonment, as Jeremiah had done about the same time. His complaints are addressed to God in language highly figurative.

5. This may be rendered, *They seek me among the dead.*

7. Waters and floods are commonly made use of to express calamity in general, and in countries subject to thunder, lightning and hurricanes, the deluges of rain that fall in a short time, together with the sudden rise of rivers and brooks, is sometimes a very alarming and distressing circumstance, especially when they happen in the night. Hence being plunged in water, or *baptized*, came to be used to denote great adversity. Thus our Saviour said to James and John (Matt. xx, 22) *Can ye be baptized with the baptism with which I shall be baptized*, meaning, Can ye bear the sufferings to which I shall be exposed. We are also said (Rom. vi, 3) to be baptized into the death of Christ.

12. It is hardly possible not to conclude from this passage, that, in the idea of the author, the power of praising God is confined to this life, and that it will cease

cease, or be suspended, when we are in the grave. If the author of this psalm lived in the time of the Babylonish captivity, it will be pretty evident that at that time the Jews had no idea of a soul, capable of action and enjoyment, while the body was in the grave; and that they expected nothing short of a resurrection at a future period.

13. That is, my prayer will be the first thing that shall meet thee, or be presented to thee, every morning.

Ps. LXXXIX. Ethan, the author of this psalm, and who is called an Ezrahite, was probably of the same family with Heman the author of the preceding, who is also called an Ezrahite. As the former bewailed some private calamity, the author of this psalm laments one of a public nature, affecting the kings of Judah, the descendants of David; so that it was probably composed in the Babylonish captivity, or on the near prospect of it. He recounts the promises of God to David, and intreats his favour to his descendants, lest the heathen should reproach the Divine Being with a breach of his promise.

10. Rahab signifies Egypt.

12. The most distant part of the country shall be equally blessed. Tabor and Hermon were at a considerable distance from each other.

13. The *joyful sound* must mean the knowledge and praise of God.

25. This refers to the extent of his dominion, which reached from the Mediterranean, or Great Sea, to the river Euphrates.

27 That

27. That is, he would be favoured as a first born son.

33. Th's was the exprefs promise of God to David, 2 Sam. vii, 25, 2 Chron. xxi, 7.

Ps. XC. This is the beginning of another division of this collection of psalms, viz. the fourth. It consists chiefly of compositions, the authors of which are unknown, and few of them are David's. This first is ascribed to Moses, who was probably led to compose it by his reflections on God's shortening the lives of the Israelites in the wilderness, and not suffering those who had rebelled to see the land of Canaan. It contains useful moral reflections on the shortness and improvement of life, adapted to all conditions of men.

1. That is, our protector, making us to dwell securely.

4. When persons are asleep time passes without notice, or seems to be very short.

8. This may allude to the transgressions of the people, on account of which their lives were shortened.

10. This sufficiently applies to the present condition of human life in all parts of the world. The reason of the change in the usual length of human life, from that of the patriarchs, does not appear. The cause had probably some relation to the deluge, tho' the effect took place gradually, as was natural; long lived parents still producing in general a long lived offspring.

17. That is, give success to our undertaking, and settle us in the promised land.

Ps.

Ps. XCI. The author of this psalm, whoever he was, composed it under a sense of the divine protection of himself, and of good men in general, in a state of public calamity, perhaps a pestilence. We are not, however, to understand what is advanced in it too literally, at least as applicable to the present times, in which we see, as Solomon observed, that all things fall alike to all. Religion, however, is the greatest support to the mind under all calamity; and it assures us of a secure refuge from every evil in the life to come.

5. In the East the pestilence is usually called the arrow of God. Homer represents Apollo as shooting arrows among the Greeks when he punished them with pestilence. *Iliad*, i. 283.

13. The antient versions instead of *lion* have the *asp*, which is a much more natural allusion than that of trampling upon a lion, and the word translated *young lion* is by the LXX rendered a *dragon*.

Ps. XCII. This psalm was probably composed by David, and perhaps soon after the rest that God gave him from his many enemies. It is intitled *a psalm or song for the sabbath day*, and may therefore intimate to us what kind of meditations suit this day, viz. on the works and providence of God, the equity of which will in due time appear, in the humiliation of the wicked, and the exaltation of the righteous. The psalmist expresses his confidence with respect to his remaining enemies, and he particularly mentions the pleasure he took in the public worship of God.

Ps. XCIII. The author of this short composition expresses the sense he had of the greatness and supreme govern-

government of God, observing that no power would be able to withstand his ; and that, being a righteous sovereign, holiness and righteousness became his servants and subjects.

Ps. XCIV. The author of this psalm complains much of corruption of morals, and of the oppression of good men by the wicked, but he asserts the government of God, who, as nothing escapes his observation, will in due time vindicate the righteous cause ; and with this reflection he makes himself easy in the prospect of all present temporary evils.

11. A slight alteration in a Hebrew word will make this verse correspond to the apostle's quotation of it. 1 Cor. iii, 20, *the thoughts of the wise.*

20. The Syriac and Arabic say *against the law.*

Ps. XCV. This psalm contains a most animated invitation to join in the worship of God, as the maker of all things, and a warning against disobedience, by the example of the Israelites, whose provocations, especially during their journey through the wilderness, are particularly mentioned.

Ps. XCVI. This psalm has the same general object with the preceding, and the composition is exceedingly sublime and animated. It asserts the supremacy of the true God, as the maker of all things, and the obligation to worship him, in preference to the false gods of the heathens. The close of it is thought by some to allude to the happy state of things that will be introduced by the Messiah, being similar to some passages in Isaiah which relate to the same period.

13 If

13. If there be any meaning in the frequent mention of a righteous judgment, both in these psalms and the writings of Solomon, the Hebrews of that age, and consequently of every other, must have had the knowledge of a future state.

Ps. XCVII. This psalm was probably composed by the author of the preceding, on the same or a similar occasion. It represents the triumph of the true God over the gods of the heathens. It may have been composed by David after his victories over the neighbouring nations, and after the ark was fixed in mount Zion.

11. The antient versions have *light is risen upon the righteous*.

Ps. XCVIII. This is a psalm of general praise to God, but more especially on account of victories obtained over the enemies of Israel; and therefore, if it was not composed by David at the conclusion of his victories, it was composed on some similar occasion, by some person who chose to imitate his style, which is highly figurative and sublime.

9. Here is the most express mention of an universal judgment.

Ps. XCIX. This psalm is also very similar to the last, and those preceding it. But besides the sentiments of praise, it likewise expresses a just sense of reverence and fear, on account of the judgments with which God had visited even his own people for their sins.

5. Probably towards the ark, the cover of which was called the *mercy seat*, the place of Gods peculiar presence with his people.

Ps.

Ps. C. This psalm, which is intitled *a psalm of praise*, is a general song of praise and thanksgiving, for the distinguishing goodness of God to the people of Israel. But their high destination, and their peculiar privileges, did not respect themselves only, but the whole world of mankind, for whose benefit it was that this one nation was thus distinguished, as a theatre on which to display his power. They were to preserve among mankind the knowledge and worship of the one true God; and therefore all nations are here invited to join in their song of praise, as well as the Israelites.

3. The latter part of this verse seems to show that by the phrase *making us*, we are not to understand God's original formation of man (for the idea that men in this sense made themselves could hardly occur to any person) but God's making the Israelites his peculiar people. It is, therefore, added *We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture*. The Chaldee has *He has made us, and his we are*, which is a just rendering of the Hebrew, and better than ours.

Ps. CI. This psalm was probably composed by David soon after the death of Saul, before he was settled in the kingdom of Israel. It contains the maxims he proposed to follow in his government, and especially his resolution to discountenance vice, and encourage virtue.

2. This seems to imply that he was not then fully settled in the kingdom. For the meaning of the phrase *when wilt thou come to me*, probably is, when wilt thou come to my assistance, and give me final success against my enemies.

Ps.

Ps. CII. This psalm was probably composed by some pious Jew after the return from the Babylonish captivity, while the temple was in ruins, and the country in a state of desolation. He expresses, however, his confidence in the divine favour and his persuasion of the faithfulness of God's promises, when the time for his just indignation should be past. This is the fifth of those that are usually called the *Penitential psalms*.

6. Choosing solitude, and avoiding the cheerful society of men.

7. A bird of night, probably the *owl*, was intended here, and not the *sparrow*, which gives no idea of solitariness, or mourning.

13. This verse seems to point to the time when the psalm was composed, viz. near the expiration of the seventy years of Jeremiah.

14. They have a veneration for the temple, tho' it is in ruins.

16. If the restoration of the Jews after their return from the captivity of seventy years appeared so extraordinary, and made such an impression on the neighbouring nations, how much greater an effect of the same kind will be produced by the restoration of the Jews to their own country, and to a glorious and prosperous state in it, after they have been so long dispersed among all the nations of the world?

27. This sublime description of the eternity of God, and the perpetuity of his dominion, is quoted by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, as an argument for the stability of the kingdom of Christ, which rests upon the promise of God, whose kingdom is over all, and
everlast-

everlasting. But it is by some very improperly applied to Christ himself.

28. It was perhaps this verse that led the apostle to apply the passage as he has done. For if God himself continue, his purpose with respect to all whom he favours will certainly be accomplished.

Ps. CIII. This psalm was probably composed by David after his recovery from some dangerous illness. It is one of the most excellent of all the psalms, for the spirit of gratitude and true piety which it breaths. It shews that this pious prince looked up to God in prosperity as well as in adversity, acknowledging him in all his ways ; an excellent pattern for our imitation.

3. Sin being the original cause of evil, the forgiveness of sin, and the removal of disease, were often used as expressions of the same import. Thus when Jesus pronounced a sick person to be recovered, by saying *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, he only meant *Be thou restored from thy disease*, and not that his sins in a moral sense were pardoned.

5. Eagles, like all other birds, change their feathers; but it is the more remarkable in them, and of more consequence to them, as they are so much upon the wing; so that after the time of moulting, as it is called, from being hardly able to fly at all, they are as vigorous as when they were young.

7. From the mention of the goodness of God to himself in particular, he is led to reflect upon the favour that God had shewed to the nation in general, and especially in the revelation of his will to them by Moses.

Ps. CIV. This psalm was probably composed by David, and seems to be a continuation of the preceding, in which he had praised God for his goodness to himself and his nation ; and the last verse was a kind of text, or subject, to this that follows, viz. *Bless the Lord all his works, in all places of his dominion.* For in this psalm he descants on the wonders of creation, enumerating the several parts of it, as the work of God, the noblest subject of a hymn of praise.

4. This should have been rendered, *He maketh the winds his angels, and flames of fire his ministers*; signifying that he makes use of them to execute his purposes. As the author is descanting on the visible creation, it is highly improbable that he should have any other meaning.

16. *Trees of the Lord* means large trees, which require more nourishment than others. So also a *river of God* means a large river. It is a Hebrew mode of speech. So the *spirit of God*, or as it may be rendered, the *wind of God*, which moved on the face of the waters at the creation, may signify nothing more than a very strong wind.

18. The *Shaphan* mentioned in this place is not the rabbit, which does not frequent rocks, but another animal described by Mr. Bruce, and called *Ashkoko*.

Ps. CV. The first fifteen verses of this psalm we find in 1 Chron. xvi, 8, as delivered by David to Asaph and his brothers, on bringing the ark of God to Jerusalem, while the continuation, as given there, is taken from other psalms of David. It is probable, therefore, that this had been composed before, as a general recapitulation

tion of the mercies of God to the people of Israel, in a short review of their history, and an exhortation grounded on it to praise God, and confide in him. Part of it, therefore, was probably made use of by David on that particular occasion, together with parts of other psalms of a similar character.

28. The LXX has, *and they rebelled against his word*. It may be rendered interrogatively, and did they not rebel against his word ?

Ps. CVI. This psalm, like the preceding, is an historical one, reminding the people of their obligation to God, for his favour to their ancestors, and likewise of the ingratitude and disobedience of those ancestors, by whose example he wished them to take warning.

15. The ancient versions, except the Chaldee, have *he sent abundance into their souls*, or appetites.

16. The term *saint* does not refer to any peculiar holiness in the character of Aaron, but to the office to which he was appointed. For to *sanctify* means to *set apart* for the service of God.

28. This refers to the Israelites being seduced into idolatry by the Moabites, in consequence of the advice of Balaam. The *sacrifices of the dead*, means sacrifices to idols, which had no life ; in opposition to which the God of Israel is called the *living*, as well as the *true God*.

47. This verse at least must have been written after the Babylonish captivity, if there be any thing like literal truth in the language.

Ps. CVII. This psalm begins the fifth division of this book. It was probably composed by David, and

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contains

contains a general view of the goodness of God, to which persons in a variety of situations are desired to attend.

3. This may allude to the various oppressions to which the Israelites were subject in the time of the Judges, when many, no doubt, were carried out of the country, and reduced to servitude.

8. These words are repeated as a kind of chorus at certain pauses in the psalm, and probably all who were present joined in singing them.

Ps. CVIII. The latter part of this psalm is nearly the same with the latter part of the sixtieth, and the former part of it with that of the fifty seventh. They were probably composed on similar occasions viz. soon after David had become king of all Israel, and was beginning to extend his conquests over the neighbouring countries, those of the Moabites, Edomites and Philistines.

8. These were the principal of the ten tribes, which at first took the part of Ishbosheth. David was of the tribe of Judah, to whom the pre-eminence was given in the prophecy of Jacob.

9. I will reduce these nations to a state of abject servitude, and triumph over them, as over the Philistines.

Ps. CIX. This psalm was probably composed by David, when he was unjustly and violently persecuted in the time of Saul. The person particularly referred to is thought to be Doeg the Edomite. The imprecations of David against him are not to be imitated by
Christi-

Christians, who are required not to return evil for evil, but blessing for cursing.

8. This verse is applied by the apostle Peter to the case of Judas ; but it has evidently no original relation to any other than some personal enemy of David, whoever he was.

Ps. CX. There are few passages of scripture of more difficult interpretation than this psalm owing in a great measure, I apprehend, to the loss of the original reading in more places than one. On the whole, it appears to me to have been composed by David about the same time with the second, and perhaps the one hundred and thirty second psalm, viz. after the promise that had been made to him to establish the throne in his posterity, as it is recorded 2 Sam. vii, 12, and 1 Chron. xvii, 11, in which the Divine Being, speaking concerning David, and any prince descended from him, says, *I will be his father, and he shall be my son.*

Several expressions in this psalm are quoted in the New Testament, as if they had had an original reference to the Messiah, but tho' they are sufficiently applicable to Jesus, and the times of the gospel, by way of accommodation, it does not therefore follow that this was the original and proper meaning of the writer, or of the spirit of God by him. The psalm is not delivered as a prophecy, and there is no expression in it but what may supposed to have been used by the author, with a view to himself and his descendants.

1. In the Chaldee paraphrase it is *The Lord said in his word* ; and it is probable that the original Hebrew was to this purpose, because as we now have it the beginning

ginning is exceedingly abrupt, and must have been unintelligible to the persons to whom it was delivered.

3. There is much obscurity in this expression ; but the meaning seems to be, that the subjects of David should be faithful to him while he maintained the worship of the true God, and that they should be numerous as the morning dew on the grass.

4. *King* and *priest* were synonymous in early times. Instead of the words *according to the order of Melchizedec*, some antient versions have *because thou wilt be a righteous king*; and it is the more probable that this is the meaning, because we nowhere read of such an order of priests as that of Melchizedec ; nor does it appear from the account of Moses, that Melchizedec was more a priest than Abraham. They were both independent princes, who of course, according to the simple manners of those times, officiated as priests to their own families and dependants.

6. This is descriptive of the conquests that David would obtain over the enemies with whom he was beset at the beginning of his reign.

7. It is not easy to say what could be meant by this expression ; but it may denote the speed with which he would pursue his enemies, not stopping to refresh himself, any more than to drink of a brook that he should pass over, like the followers of Gideon, in their march against the Midianites.

Ps. CXI. This is a general psalm of praise, and must have been composed with a view to its being committed to memory ; since every verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and in their proper

proper order. Some other psalms, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, are composed in the same artificial manner, and no doubt with the same view.

Ps. CXII. This psalm is composed in the same artificial manner with the preceding, each clause of a verse beginning with a different letter of the alphabet. The subject of it is the favour of God to the righteous.

Ps. CXIII. This psalm, and the five following ones, containing praises and thanksgiving, were always held in the highest esteem by the Jews, and are recited by them at their meals, and especially on festival days. This psalm contains some instances of the goodness of God to mankind in general.

Ps. CXIV. This psalm refers to the goodness of God to the Israelitish nation, especially those which were exhibited on their leaving Egypt. The language is highly poetical, and represents all nations as alarmed and disturbed at the presence of God, which was so conspicuous in favour of the Israelites.

Ps. CXV. This psalm was probably composed when the Israelites were threatened with an invasion from their Gentile neighbours, perhaps in the time of Jehoshaphat. It asserts their dependance upon God, and their trust in him, in opposition to all false gods, which are here spoken of as utterly impotent and contemptible.

17. It is an argument with the psalmist in his prayer for deliverance, that if their enemies prevailed and destroyed them, they would not be in a condition to praise God; which implies that, in the state of the dead, men have no such power. But all our powers will be revived at the resurrection.

Ps. CXVI. This psalm was composed by some pious person after escaping some imminent danger, and probably while he was at a distance from Jerusalem, to which he now had access. It might, therefore, be by David, during his flight from his son Absalom. He discovers a deep sense of gratitude for the divine interposition in his favour.

3. That is, *I was in great danger of death*, for the word here rendered *hell* means the grave, or the state of death.

4. All men had deceived and deserted him, and none of them were to be depended upon.

15. That is, God has so great a value for men of virtue and piety, that he keeps them as his treasure, and will not abandon them to be killed at the pleasure of their enemies.

16. This is by some rendered *the son of thy truth*.

Ps. CXVII. This psalm is a kind of chorus to general songs of praise, probably intended to be repeated at the close of them, or at certain intervals in the singing of them.

Ps. CXVIII. This is a psalm of praise, probably composed by David on his return to Jerusalem, after his victories over the neighbouring nations, and when he had fixed himself, and the ark of God, at Jerusalem.

19. This looks as if this psalm was designed to be sung in solemn procession; and this particular verse to be recited when they approached the entrance of the inclosure, in which the ark was kept.

22. This expresses the contemptuous light in which

• David

David had been considered, as a stone which the builders of a house did not think worth while to make any use of, but to which they afterwards gave the most important place in the edifice. It is quoted by our Saviour Luke xix 14. xx, 17, and also by the apostle Peter, Acts iv, 11, 12, as if it had a reference to the Messiah; but it might be applied with equal propriety to any person in the same circumstances; who after being despised was advanced to the high rank to which he was intitled.

24. That is, the day in which the Lord has distinguished me by appearing in my favour, and subduing my enemies. Christians often apply this to the Lord's day, but without any particular reason.

26. This was probably sung by the Levites as they met David, at his entrance into the tabernacle, or the inclosure in which the ark was kept.

27. In the area near the altar of burnt offering there was convenience for killing the animals that were to be sacrificed, rings or hooks being driven into the ground for the purpose of holding them. On this occasion the whole of this area, from the extremity of it to the altar itself, might be taken up in this manner.

Ps. CXIX. This psalm was probably composed with a view to its being committed to memory, as the structure of it is very artificial, every eight verses beginning with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and in their proper order. It does not appear to have been composed on any particular occasion, but consists of pious sentiments, suiting persons in very different situations, and without any regard to natural connection.

In

In this psalm the words that we translate *law, statutes, judgment, and testimony*, seem to be used promiscuously ; it being deemed a beauty in composition to change the phrase without changing the meaning.

83. That is, I am shrivelled up as a leathern bottle, by hanging in the smoke.

96. Nothing here is perfect, or can give complete satisfaction.

Ps. CXX. It does not appear why this psalm and the fourteen others that follow it, should be called *songs of degrees, or steps*. It is possible that they might be sung as the Levites ascended the steps that led up to the place of the national worship. But when the various subjects of them are considered, we see no reason why they should be sung in that place. They are all short, but by no means of the same length, and they have no other agreement that can be discovered.

This psalm was probably composed by David when he fled from Saul, and was obliged to take refuge in the neighbouring countries, in the persecution excited by Doeg the Edomite.

4. Charcoal of juniper bushes was said by the ancients to keep burning longer than that of other wood.

5. These were places in Arabia whither David had fled when he found no safety in his own country.

Ps. CXXI. In this psalm the author expresses the confidence that good men may always have in the protection of divine providence ; and tho' it be not afforded them in a visible manner at this day ; the effects of the divine favour will be found in lightning all the troubles

troubles of this life, as well as in the rewards of virtue in another.

1. Fortresses, as places of safety, were generally built on hills, and to these the psalmist alludes.

Ps. CXXII. This psalm was composed by David after the ark was removed to Jerusalem, and was probably sung by those who resorted thither from all parts of the country at the great festivals. It is an encomium on the city, and the religious offices performed there, with a prayer for its prosperity.

Ps. CXXIII. This psalm must have been composed when the Israelites were much distressed, perhaps by the invasion of the Assyrians in the time of Hezekiah.

Ps. CXXIV. This psalm must have been composed by David on some great deliverance from a combination of his enemies, probably that general combination of all the neighbouring states presently after his accession to the throne, which terminated in his complete triumph over them all, and reducing them to a state of subjection to him.

Ps. CXXV. This psalm, like the preceding, expresses much joy and gratitude for the protection of the Divine Being, and was therefore probably composed on a similar occasion.

Ps. CXXVI. This psalm is generally supposed to have been composed by Ezra after the return from the Babylonish captivity. It expresses a strong sense of gratitude to God for such a deliverance.

4. That is, make our restoration complete. It was at that time very imperfect, and the country in a state of
of

of great desolation. The brooks in Arabia are regularly filled in the rainy seasons, and dry again in the summer.

6. Husbandmen in time of distress, like those after the return from Babylon, were often plundered of the seed that they were carrying to sow, so that in the fear of this they might be said to go out weeping.

Ps. CXXVII. This psalm was probably composed by Solomon. It expresses a sense of a dependance upon God for every blessing, especially in a numerous offspring, alluding perhaps to the promise of God that the posterity of David by him would never fail.

2. He *giveth sleep*, meaning perhaps rest and refreshment in general, to *his beloved*, or the righteous.

5. Assemblies of the people, and courts of judicature, were held near the gates of cities, and there great interest often weighed more than justice. But a man who had a numerous family would be powerful, and therefore not afraid of his enemies, either in a court of justice, or on any other occasion.

Ps. CXXVIII. This psalm contains a general promise of happiness to the virtuous, and is thought by some to have been pronounced as a benediction on the celebration of a marriage.

Ps. CXXIX. The author of this psalm expresses his firm trust in God, notwithstanding the affliction to which he was exposed, and denounces the judgments of God against his oppressors, and the wicked in general.

8 This

8. This seems to have been an usual form of benediction in the time of harvest especially. Thus Booz says to his reapers, Ruth ii, 4, *The Lord be with you,* and in answer to him they say, *The Lord bless thee.*

Ps. CXXX. This psalm was probably composed by David in some of his distresses. These contributed to give his mind a pious turn, which he never lost in the time of his prosperity. Thus he came to acknowledge God in all his ways.

Ps. CXXXI. This psalm might have been composed by David when he was unjustly accused of treason against Saul. He appeals to God to witness that he was not actuated by the immoderate ambition which his enemies ascribed to him.

Ps. CXXXII. This psalm might have been composed by Solomon on the occasion of building the temple, and placing the ark of God in it.

6. David might have been at Bethlehem the place of his nativity, called also Ephrata, Gen. xxxv. 19. when he was informed concerning the proper place for building the temple.

13. Zion may be used in this place for Jerusalem in general. For it was not on mount Zion, but on Moriah, that the temple was built.

14. This alludes to the removal of the tabernacle and the ark from place to place; but in the temple, God would have, as it were, a fixed residence.

17. This is a metaphor taken from the burning of a lamp that is constantly supplied with oil. Thus as one generation dies another takes their place.

Ps.

Ps. CXXXIII. This psalm contains an encomium on union and brotherly love, and it is supposed to have been composed by David on the union of all the twelve tribes, in acknowledging him on the death of Ishbosheth.

2. That is, not the lower, but the upper border of his garment, close to his neck.

3. This may be rendered, *As the dew of Hermon that descendeth on the dry hills.* Hermon might be noted for its copious dews, and so come to be used proverbially for copious dews in general.

Maundrell says he learned by experience the meaning of this passage, for that in passing over it their tents were wet with dew as if it had rained all night. *Travels* p. 57. Hermon is called *Sion* in Deut. iv, 48 ; and if the higher part of it was called Hermon, and the lower part *Sion*, the dew of Hermon after condensing and collecting into a stream, might descend upon *Sion*.

Ps. CXXXIV. This psalm contains a short exhortation to praise God, and is thought by some to have been pronounced by the Levites at the change of their watches in the temple. It was certainly sufficiently proper for that purpose ; and it is the last of those that are called songs of degrees, or steps.

Ps. CXXXV. This psalm was evidently designed for the national worship. It celebrates the praises of God, especially his goodness to the people of Israel, in opposition to the false gods of other nations, who had no power to serve their deluded worshippers.

Ps.

Ps. CXXXVI. This psalm, like the preceding, is a review of the goodness of God to mankind in general, and to the Israelites in particular. It seems to have been sung in the national worship, on great festivals, and other solemn occasions. Mention is made of David, of Solomon, of Jehosaphat, and of the Jews after the return from Babylon, singing praises to God in this form, *For his mercy endureth forever*. It is probable, therefore, that at those times this very psalm was recited, and that they repeated the words *for his mercy endureth for ever* by way of chorus.

Ps. CXXXVII. This psalm was evidently composed during the captivity at Babylon. The author of it laments the situation of his countrymen, exposed to the insults of their haughty masters, whom he prays that God would punish. We are not, however, to adopt the spirit of this psalm; but, as becomes christians, to *be good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us*. There is a pleasing simplicity in the sentiments of this psalm, and what is to be condemned in it is very natural.

Ps. CXXXVIII. This is called a *psalm of David*, and yet mention is made in it of the temple, which was not built in his reign. But in other places the word *temple* seems to have been used for the tabernacle, or the place of national worship. It is a hymn of praise, well adapted to the case of David on his elevation to the throne, acknowledging the distinguishing goodness of God in raising him to that dignity from his original low condition, and expressing his confidence in the di-
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vine protection, notwithstanding all the difficulties in which he was involved.

Ps. CXXXIX. The design of David in this psalm was the same with that in many others. He appeals to God for his integrity, probably when he was accused of treasonable designs against Saul, especially as he expresses his confidence in the divine goodness, and his persuasion that all his enemies would be brought to confusion. In this psalm, however, he takes a greater scope than usual, and expresses his sense of the divine omnipresence, in a copious and emphatical manner; which makes it a composition of particular value, highly useful to all persons at all times. He also recounts the mercies of God to him, and mentions the divine care of him from the time of his infancy, and even his conception in the womb.

Let this psalm be compared with any hymn composed by any heathen poet in honour of their gods, and the striking superiority of the sentiments in this must convince any reasonable person, that David, and the Israelites in general, had advantages for religious knowledge which the rest of mankind had not. The supposition of the divine origin of the religion of the Hebrews will account for the remarkable fact; but on any other supposition these psalms are a greater miracle than any of those that are recorded by Moses. No other people, tho' more enlightened in other respects, ever wrote in this strain, nor were possessed of these sentiments. No man whatever, in the whole compass of profane history, appears to have felt as the writers of these psalms did,

did, or to have had the sublime views of the divine presence, character, and moral government, that they had. Let unbelievers account for this difference if they can.

14. The antient versions have, *Thou hast done terrible, or great things:*

Ps. CXL. This psalm was probably composed by David during his persecution by Saul, at the instigation of Doeg the Edomite. He prays for deliverance from the malice of his enemies, and implores the divine vengeance against them. In this respect the spirit of this psalm is not to be breathed by christians; but the disposition of David to acknowledge God in all his ways, and on all occasions to refer himself to him, is highly worthy of our imitation. It is the great principle of religion, and the foundation of all virtue.

Ps. CXLI. This psalm of David was probably composed by him during his persecution by Saul, and the sentiments of it are similar to those of many other psalms composed by him in the same state of his affairs. He refers himself to God for protection, and prays for the disappointment of his enemies.

6. This seems to allude to the advantage that David had over Saul in the cave of Engaddi, when, with great generosity, he spared his life. Mr. Durell translates it, *Their rulers were let go in the sides of the rock, and heard my words which were kind.*

Ps. CXLII. This is the last of the psalms that are called *penitential*. It contains such sentiments of humility, submission, and trust in God, as David always shewed in situations of danger and distress.

Ps. CXLIII. This is another of the many psalms of David, which he composed during his persecution by Saul, or the rebellion of Absalom. He casts himself on the mercy of God, and expresses his hope of protection.

Ps. CXLIV. This psalm must have been composed by David after the beginning, and before the completion, of his success, in the wars in which he was engaged on his accession to the throne. He expresses the strong sense that he had of his dependance upon God, and his hope of the continuance of his favour.

2. In the Syriac it is, *My refuge and my deliverer.*

Ps. CXLV. This psalm has always been considered as one of the most excellent in the whole collection, both for sentiment and composition. It is a general hymn of praise, celebrating the perfections and providence of God; and every verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, arranged in their proper order. It is in vain to look for any thing like this psalm, as well as many others, in the compositions of any heathen writers.

14 The verse beginning with the letter *N* is wanting in the Hebrew, but is supplied in some of the antient versions with this, *The Lord is faithful in all his words, and holy in all his works.*

Ps. CXLVI. This psalm and all the remaining ones, begin and end with *Hallelujah*, which signifies *Praise ye the Lord*. This seems to have been composed after some disappointment in looking for assistance from princes, tho' the exhortation to put confidence in God, rather

rather than in any man, might be advanced without any such experience.

Ps. CXLVII. This psalm must have been composed in a prosperous state of the country, after some great calamity; and therefore it has been thought to suit the time of the return from Babylon. But the greater part of the sentiments relate to the providence of God in general.

10. *Legs* mean *strength*. God prefers men for their moral qualities only.

Ps. CLXVIII. In this psalm the author calls upon all the parts of nature to join him in praising God. It must have been composed in a time of national prosperity.

7. Great serpents, and the caverns in which they dwell.

Ps. CXLIX. This psalm was probably composed on occasion of some signal victory, or in the course of a successful war, to animate those who were engaged in it.

5. This may mean *they will sing aloud from the heart*, as the bed, or seat of thought.

Ps. CL. This short invitation to all creatures to praise God, and to make use of all kinds of musical instruments for that purpose, is a proper conclusion to this collection of psalms. It was, no doubt, particularly intended to be sung by the Levites in the national worship, in which all the instruments here mentioned were used.

1. Praise God on account of his holiness, praise him on account of the extent of his power.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

P R O V E R B S.

WHAT is commonly called *the wisdom of the ancients* consists chiefly of short sentences, and generally contains directions for the conduct of life. Such are the sayings of the seven wise men of Greece, and such are the greater part of these of Solomon; but they are of much superior value, recommending the duty of piety, as well as those which relate to common life and manners. The nine first chapters are a kind of regular composition, the parts having a connection with each other, having probably been composed by Solomon in this form. From Ch. x, to xxv, the observations are miscellaneous, the several sayings having no connection. From Ch. xxv to xxx, the book contains other sayings of Solomon, collected by the servants of Hezekiah; and the two last chapters contain the sayings of other persons, and none of Solomon's.

Ch. I. 1. This has the appearance of a regular beginning of a work avowedly Solomons'; and it was probably designed to be of considerable extent; but it does not seem to have been finished according to his original intention, farther than the end of the ninth chapter.

From

From this place, however, to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, these proverbs were probably written by himself; but not being regularly arranged, or illustrated like those in the first chapters, they look like loose materials for a more complete work than he lived, or found leisure to finish.

6. It is evident that by *wisdom* Solomon meant both useful knowledge of every kind, and a good disposition of mind, the foundation of happiness to a man's self and others; and that the terms rendered *knowledge*, *instruction*. &c. &c. are used promiscuously; it being reckoned a great beauty in composition to express the same thing in different words, or words which signify nearly the same thing.

7. A respect to the authority and commands of God is here made the foundation of all true wisdom. The Hebrew nation was under the immediate government of God; their laws and moral precepts were dictated by him, and committed to writing by his especial order. It was natural, therefore, for a person of this nation to make obedience to God, the hope of his favour, and the fear of his displeasure, the leading principle of human conduct. But it is a sentiment that would not occur to heathens, who knew little or nothing of God, or of the relation they bore to him, and who had no certain knowledge of his interference in the affairs of men.

9. Next to a respect to God, Solomon inculcates that which is due to parents, on which the greatest stress was always laid by the ancients in general. When there were few or no books, all the knowledge that a child had the means of acquiring was from the instruction of

its parents ; so that these precepts were of more consequence in those early times than they are now, tho' it will always be of great use to the peace and happiness of families, that the dispositions and sentiments* of all the members of it be agreeable to each other.

16. Bands of robbers were very frequent in early times, and especially on the borders of small states, as those to the East of Palestine, where they could commit depredations* in one country, and take refuge in another.

18. To engage with such lawless persons is so evidently hazardous, that it resembles a bird going into a snare which she sees to be laid for her. It is as if they laid wait for their own lives, and not for those of others.

20. This is a beautiful personification of wisdom, inviting men to attend to her.

Ch. II. 6. To the Hebrews the most valuable knowledge was that which they had immediately from God, in the laws and precepts which he gave them.

19. The great object of the wisdom recommended by Solomon was to preserve men from vice. Robbery is mentioned in the first place, and fornication and adultery in the second.

22. There are many express promises to the Israelites that they should remain in the possession of their country so long as they kept free from idolatry, and observed the precepts delivered to them by Moses ; and they were threatened with expulsion from it in case of apostasy and disobedience. It may be to promises and threatnings of this kind that both David and Solomon allude;

allude; tho', as they must have seen that virtue is not always rewarded, or vice punished, in this life, and they frequently speak of a future righteous judgment, it is not improbable that in such language as they frequently use, they had a view to a future state of this earth after the resurrection, which the Israelitish nation appear never to have been ignorant of, tho' it might not be much upon their minds; and therefore there are not so many plain allusions to it as we might expect. Things that are very distant are always apt to be overlooked, whatever be their importance.

Ch. III. 2. This could only be in the general course of things. He must have known that there were many exceptions to it.

6. An habitual regard to God is the foundation of all virtue, and it is no where inculcated but in the scriptures. What is here said must, however, be understood with some latitude, for by applying to God men do not receive particular instructions how to conduct themselves in the safest and best manner. But to be governed by the rules of piety and virtue is certainly the safest, and therefore the wisest course that a man can take. He will find it to be so in general in this life, and assuredly in another.

8. In the East medicines are often applied externally, particularly to the stomach and belly.

9. This precept is peculiar to the Hebrew nation. Their offerings were considered as given to God, who would not fail to make them an abundant recompence.

12. This relation of God to mankind as a *father* frequently occurs in the scriptures, and it is a peculiarly pleasing and useful sentiment. This leads us to consider afflictions as not sent in anger, but in love, in order to correct and improve us.

20. Here wisdom is used in a sense different from that of moral virtue ; so that these two verses have no connection with what goes before or after them.

35. These are excellent moral precepts delivered in language peculiarly forcible.

Ch. IV. 3. Solomon seems to have had great affection for his mother, as well as for his father, and to have received the best instruction from them both.

10. This might be principally directed to his son and successor Rehoboam, but it may be understood of any inferior ; and princes often speak of their subjects as their children.

19. The comparison of virtue to light, and of vice to darkness, shews the strongest contrast between them in favour of the former.

23. By *heart* we may understand the natural propensities and desires of men, which are the springs of all their actions.

Ch. V. 3. Prostitution was absolutely forbidden to Israelitish women, but not by any law to women of other countries. On this account a *strange woman*, and a *prostitute* are often used as synonymous terms.

11. The debilitating and pernicious effects of excessive venery were noticed in these times ; but they are much more evident since the introduction of a new and dreadful disorder which has arisen from it.

19 This

19. This is excellent advice for securing domestic happiness, which is of far more value than any that a man can find from home.

21. That adultery was considered as a great offence in the eye of God, as well as one of the greatest violations of the good order of society, appears from the language of Joseph when he was tempted by the wife of Potiphar.

Ch VI. 5. The preceding precepts and advices relate to the moral conduct of life; but this and many others are of a prudential nature, teaching men to guard against inconvenience and loss from the treachery or the negligence of others. We see in them that Solomon, tho' a king, was well acquainted with common life, that in his time human nature was the very same that it is at this day, and that the same vices were as common among the Israelites as among other nations. The caution in this precept is against becoming surety for money lent by a friend to a stranger, in which case the friend might not be able to pay, and the stranger might have no compassion.

11. As a *post*, or *swift messenger*, not merely as a *traveller*.

13. This must be a description of a very low character, or a number of such persons as can give hints to one another by signs unknown to others.

16. This manner of expression occurs in the sayings of Agur, Ch. 30. It was, no doubt, thought very striking.

31. By the laws of Moses a thief was to restore five

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oxen for one, and four sheep for one. In this place; therefore, the phrase *seven times* must mean *many times*.

Ch. VII. 6. This is a very interesting and instructive account of the arts of an adultress.

17. Instead of *aloes* it should probably be the sandal wood, as observed before.

22. There is a beautiful gradation in these images. He first goes as an ox to the slaughter, that is with reluctance; then as a hart boundeth unto the toils (for so it ought to be rendered) that is inconsiderately, and then as a bird into a snare, with all the rapidity of flight.

Ch. VIII. This chapter contains a beautiful personification of wisdom, as speaking to men, and giving them good advice.

12. We see here the indiscriminate use of the word wisdom in this book. It signifies every excellence of the understanding, as well as of the heart.

22. This is a description of wisdom as employed by God in the creation of the world, and the formation of man.

32. If wisdom was of so great account with God, it ought to be attended to by man.

Ch. IX. This is a more extended personification of wisdom.

3. It is customary in the East to send women to invite persons to entertainments.

12. If he acted wisely it was for our advantage, not that of his adviser. Also his neglect of advice was wholly at his own risk.

12 After

After this verse insert the three following from the LXX, and other versions.

He that trusteth in falshood feedeth the winds. He also pursueth the birds of the air.

He forsaketh the way of his own vineyard, and forgetteth the path to his field;

That he may wander through desolate and parched places, where there is no water to quench his thirst, and he gathereth with his hands unprofitableness.

13. Having personified wisdom in giving men good advice, he introduces a prostitute seducing men to their ruin.

Ch. X. There was not much regular connection in the contents of the preceding chapter, but the sayings that follow are still more miscellaneous, and more properly *proverbs*, or short sentences, intended to convey an important meaning in a few words.

7. Having mentioned what a man will suffer in his character after death, it might have been expected that some hint would have been given of what would befall him in another state.

10. To *wink with the eye* is always characteristic of fraud.

—*But he that freely reproveth maketh safety.*

SYR. AR. The present Hebrew is copied from v. 8.

16. Here the word *sin*, seems to be used for *suffering*, as the punishment of sin.

Ch. XI. 2. There are more admonitions against pride not only in this book of Proverbs, and the Psalms, but in the New Testament, than against any other particular vice, Pride leads a man to despise all instruction and

on and advice, and even to set himself up against God ; whereas humility is teachable. A humble man is thankful for instruction, and will never disobey the known will of God.

4. This day of wrath probably means some judgment inflicted by God.

The custom of shaking hands on making any engagement, or taking an oath, is common in the East as well as with us ; and to this there seems to be an allusion here.

22. This is a very apt comparison. A jewel is no ornament to a hog, nor is beauty to a woman destitute of virtue and honour. Here is an allusion to the custom of wearing jewels at the nose, which is perforated for the purpose, generally through the left nostril.

31. The dispensation of good and evil is so evidently promiscuous in this life, that I am inclined to think that the promises of the *inheritance of the earth* to the righteous by Solomon, David, and others, who at the same time complain of the prosperity of the wicked, must have a reference to a future state of the earth when the distribution of good and evil will be more equal than it is at present.

Ch. XII. 10. A good man is kind to his cattle, but the wicked are cruel even to men.

12. The word that is here translated *net*, may be derived from another root which signifies *fortress*. The meaning may be that the wicked hope for security in their courses, but cannot find it, which the righteous do.

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Ch. XIII. 8. A rich man taken captive may redeem himself, but a poor man in the same circumstances must bear whatever is imposed upon him.

20. This is one of the most important of all precepts. So the apostle says, *Evil communications corrupt good manners*; and it is commonly said that a man may be known by the company that he keeps.

23. *There is much food in the tillage of rulers, but it happeneth that it is destroyed*; that is, where there is great abundance, there is generally great waste. Dou.

Ch. XIV. 1. Women have more to do, and have more influence, in the family in Eastern countries than many persons imagine. This will appear from what is said of a good wife in the last chapter of this book. It is only in the harems of the rich and luxurious that women have nothing to do, and are merely subservient to the pleasure of men.

22. After this verse the antient versions add, *They that do evil know neither mercy nor truth; but mercy and truth are with them that do good.*

23. This book contains many excellent precepts in favour of industry, and this is one of them. The labour of the hands is useful, but that of the lips only, or a talkative disposition, is the characteristic of an idle man, and leads to poverty.

24. The Chaldee has, *The ornament of a fool is his folly*, that is wisdom leads to riches, but folly to nothing but more folly.

32. This verse is variously rendered in the antient versions, but none of them give any idea of the righteous having hope in a state after death. The meaning probably

probably is, that the righteous may hope to escape in the most imminent danger of death.

Ch. XV. 3. This is a sentiment that could not be known to any heathen. See also v. 11.

8. The Hebrew religion was far from consisting in mere ceremonies, like that of the heathens. That nothing could supply the place of moral virtue, is the language of all the prophets.

24. This may be rendered, *the thoughts of the wise are in the way of life.*

Ch. XVI. 1. This may be rendered, *The devise of the heart is from man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord;* and the meaning may be, that whatever man may intend, nothing can be done but what God permits: This is more fully expressed v. 9.

4. *The Lord disposeth all things in a suitable manner, and the wicked to the day of wrath.* Gale's Sermons.

7. Even vice is made subservient to the purposes of providence, as was the obstinacy of Pharaoh.

38. This is agreeable to the doctrine of a particular and unusual providence, directing things seemingly the most casual.

Ch. XVII 1. Feasts were generally made on occasion of peace offerings.

2. Slaves were often well treated by the antients, and even had the confidence of their masters, so as to be intrusted with the conduct of the most important affairs. It was a slave that Abraham sent to get a wife for his son, and Joseph had full authority in the house of his master Potiphar.

14. A small breach in a dam may seem to be of little consequence, but a constant current of the water widens it, till all the water run out.

19. To *exalt the gate*, or build it high with towers over it, is an argument of pride and ostentation.

Ch. XVIII, 1. This may be rendered, *the studious man seeketh that which is desirable, and intermeddleth with all wisdom.*

2 He takes no pleasure but in ostentatious talking.

16. No person of consequence in the East is approached without a present.

20. Prudence in discourse is the way to prosper in the world.

Ch. XIX. 17. There are many precepts in the scriptures recommending charity. This is one of the most forcible. Whatever is given to the poor is only lent to one who is abundantly able to repay it.

24. This should be rendered a slothful man putteth his hand into the dish; alluding to the custom of not using knives or forks, but of the fingers only, in the East.

Ch. XX. 14. Many of these proverbs are not precepts, but sensible observations on the common conduct of life, and on the different characters and pursuits of men; and they shew that human nature has been the same in all ages and all countries.

16. Lend nothing but on the best security to a person who is so imprudent as to be surety for a stranger, and especially a common prostitute.

24. Since the providence of God overrules all things, the ultimate consequences of men's actions are known

known to God only; men often intending one thing, and God another.

25. Men should not take what has been devoted to God, or endeavour to evade the vows they have made.

26. To bring the wheel over men is an allusion to one of the antient methods of threshing, by a wheel with teeth in it, which separates the corn from the straw.

30. Severe blows, which even leave scars, may sometimes be necessary to correct obstinate persons.

Ch. XXI. 1. How just was Solomon's idea of the universal providence of God, in directing all the resolutions of princes, and consequently all the revolutions of states, to answer his purposes.

3. This is another evidence of the excellent moral tendency of the Hebrew religion. See also v. 27.

4. Durell translates this, *He that has a high look has also a proud heart, and the light of the wicked is sinful.*

6. He dealeth falsely who getteth treasure by slander. The vain man is driven into the snare of death. So the LXX &c.

8. The meaning is that the way of a man loaded with any thing (as with crimes in this case) is unsteady, not being able to support the weight, but the upright walk steadily.

17. Eating bread dipped in oil is reckoned delicious in the East, but it is of course expensive.

31. There is a regard to God and his providence in these advices which we never find in the writings of heathens.

Ch. XXII.

Ch. XXII. 8. *He shall be consumed by a rod of his own*, that is the mischief he intended for others will come on himself.

13. A lion in the streets of a city would be very extraordinary indeed ; but nothing is too absurd for an excuse to an idle man.

17. From this verse the style of the work changes to what it was in the beginning of the book. It is a more regular composition than the intermediate part.

Ch. XXIII. 2. There is much uncertainty in the rendering of this verse. The antient versions have, *For thou must prepare the same*, that is, when thou invitest him in return.

4. Court not the rich man, but in thy prudence avoid him.

6. The dread of mischief from an evil or malignant eye was common in all antient nations. But it seems only to mean an envious or covetous person.

18. That thy latter end may be prosperous.

20. Flesh meat is but rarely eaten in hot countries.

35. This describes the stupid conduct, and absurd speeches, of a drunken man.

Ch. XXIV. 7. In the gate means in a court of judicature, where the wise only are attended to.

17. This precept borders on that universal benevolence inculcated by our Saviour, who exhorts us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that hate us and persecute us.

27. Be sure you be fully prepared for every thing you undertake.

Ch. XXV. The preceding sayings of Solomon must have been reduced to the form in which they now are, before the time of Hezekiah, probably soon after the death of Solomon ; for there is too little uniformity in the composition to have been finished by the author. But other sayings of Solomon had probably been collected by different persons, or had been left in a still more unconnected state by Solomon himself ; and Hezekiah, having access to them, thought proper to have them added to the rest. They are as useful, and as intelligible, as any of the others.

1. The works and providence of God appear more wonderful from their being inscrutable to us ; but the measures of civil magistrates ought to be perfectly intelligible to all persons. If they give any sentence, it ought to be after the most diligent inquiry into the merits of the case.

7. The clause *whom thine eyes have seen* is out of its place, and perhaps ought to begin the ninth verse thus, *Speak what thy eyes have seen, and discover not a secret to another.* In this case the first part of verse 9. should be connected with the preceding by the particle *but*.

11. By *apples of gold* we are probably to understand *oranges*, or *citrons*, which have the colour of gold. These presented in vessels of silver would have a pleasing appearance.

16. This is a lesson of moderation in all our gratifications and pursuits.

20. The custom of cooling liquors with ice, or snow, was usual in the East, as well as in Greece and Italy.

This is not our nitre, but an alkaline earth, called
by

by the antients *natron*, on which if vinegar, or any acid, be poured, an effervescence will be produced.

22. The revenge of our wrongs should be left to God, who can do it more effectually, as well as more justly, than we should do it ourselves.

Ch. XXVI. 1. These things are very unreasonable:

2. Imprecations on no just ground need not to be regarded, any more than the flight of a bird. The heathens laid great stress on solemn curses, pronounced by persons invested with a sacred character. Of this we have an example in Balak king of Moab hiring Balaam to curse the Israelites.

4. To talk like a fool is to be a fool; and yet it may be proper to check the folly of others. Here the phrase *according to his folly*, is, no doubt, to be understood in two different senses, as many other words and phrases in other languages are; and in this proverbial manner of speaking, it might be thought a beauty in the style.

8. It will not remain long. It probably means a *precious stone*, which it would be extreme folly to put into a sling, like a common stone.

9. Fools will not make a right application of parables, but will be in danger of exposing themselves by them.

13. This occurred before, Ch. xxii, 13,

22. The punishment of pounding in a mortar is actually practised in Turkey. The *Ulemah*, or *lawyers*, cannot legally be put to death in any other way. *Fragments*, p. 55.

23. As refined silver spread over a potsherd, so are ardent or flattering lips with a wicked heart.

Ch. XXVII. 21. It will appear by the manner in which men hear themselves praised whether they deserve it or not, whether they be modest or vain.

24. No inheritance is so much to be depended upon as the industrious attendance to a man's husbandry, which was almost the only occupation of the Israelites.

Ch. XXVIII. 2. This probably alludes to a state of civil war.

3. The more needy a man has been, the more rapacious he will generally be: It is frequently found that persons raised from a low and abject state, behave the worst in prosperity, with more insolence than persons brought up in affluence.

12. When the wicked are in power, good men endeavour to conceal themselves.

Ch. XXIX. 9. Whether he reply to him seriously, or jocosely, he will find it to be equally to no purpose.

13. The poor and his oppressor meet together. The Lord has his eye upon them both, and they will both appear before his tribunal.

18. Where there is no prophet to instruct the people.

19. It may be rendered, *when, tho' he understands, he will not answer*. In this case words cannot have any effect.

21. This verse is variously rendered. The LXX has, *He that is delicately brought up from a child shall be a servant, and shall grieve for himself at the last*.

Ch. XXX. This chapter contains the sayings of some person of the name of Agur, addressed to two persons who were probably his disciples, but who he or they were is unknown.

1 Here

1. Here the word *prophecy* signifies any serious and useful saying.

4. This seems to be a modest apology, for his ignorance, when he had been interrogated concerning God and his works.

8. This alludes to the custom of giving servants a supply of food for the day. The same is alluded to in the Lord's prayer. It was commonly given in the evening for the use of the next day.

9. Perhaps his pupils had requested to be informed concerning the proper subjects of prayer, and this is in the form of a prayer, and a most judicious and excellent one.

10. This must be intended not to aggravate the condition of a slave by speaking of his faults to his master, their case being generally hard enough.

16. The leech will fill itself with blood till it throws it up again, the earth receives all the rain that falls upon it, and in hot climates there is never more than is wanted; the grave receives all the dead; and of the eager desire to have children in the Eastern countries we have many instances in the scripture history, but this may be rendered the *ravenous Gier eagle*.

19. The Syriac has *the ways of a man in his youth*, who for strength and agility is as distinguished as the eagle for his power of flight.

23. In all these cases power acquired by persons void of understanding is sure to be abused.

25. This is the *Ashksq* that lives among the rocks described by Mr. Bruce.

28. Instead of *spider* it should be a *small lizard*.

Ch. XXXI. 1: It is very ingeniously conjectured that instead of *the words of king Lemuel*, concerning whom nothing at all is known, the original reading was *the words of his mother to the king*; and the subject and style of address thro' the whole greatly favours the conjecture. Who was the king, or who the mother, is uncertain. It might be Bathsheba and Solomon.

10. This is a fine description of a good wife, agreeable to the manners of the East in primitive times.

15. She gives tasks to her maids.

16. This was not a woman shut up in a haram, and who had no power or influence in the affairs of the family.

21. With double garments.

25. She has no dread of the time to come.

30: *Gracefulness* is deceitful, a word intended to be synonymous to *beauty* in the next clause.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

ECCLESIASTES.

THIS book is evidently the composition of Solomon, and must have been written towards the close of his life, when he had seen and observed much, and, after having had the enjoyment of every thing that he could wish, was disappointed and unhappy. The arrangement of the sentiments seems to be very irregular, and the state of mind in which the several parts were composed was very different, unless some things be advanced by way of objection to others, without any notice of a change of speakers. Many of the sentences in this book are proverbial, and might with propriety have been inserted in the preceding book. The object of the whole work is evidently to shew the vanity of the ordinary pursuits of mankind, in what the true enjoyment of life consists, and the importance of having a constant respect to God, and the laws that he has prescribed to us.

Ch. I. 1. This is a general observation, which is afterwards illustrated by the enumeration of many particulars.

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11. There is in these verses an air of dissatisfaction with the general state of things, that according to their literal meaning cannot be approved, complaining of a dull uniformity in the course of nature, and providence. But tho' the changing scenes be not new to some, they will always be new and interesting to others.

18. Notwithstanding this, knowledge, as Lord Bacon observed, is power. The more we understand of the laws of nature, the more we can avail ourselves of their operation in procuring the various conveniences of life. And the very investigation of the laws of nature is one of the most engaging of all pursuits, and will afford endless satisfaction, because to us the subject is inexhaustible.

Ch. II. 11. Such pursuits and enjoyments as are here described soon become insipid, and a life so spent is a burden which many persons, unable to bear, throw off. Of those who destroy themselves few are poor and distressed, compared to those who seem to have every thing that the world can give them.

12. If a king, who has the command of every thing, cannot be happy in these enjoyments, how can any other person whose powers are much inferior.

14. Notwithstanding the superiority of wisdom to folly, wise men and fools are alike exposed to the common calamities of life. But tho' no knowledge can guard us against all the evils of life, it may secure us against many of them, and it certainly contributes in a great degree to superior enjoyment.

19. It is certainly a great satisfaction to leave the fruits of our labour and ingenuity to those who will value

live and improve them. But if a man's children should not be of this character, the world in general may derive advantage from what we do. This prospect, and the immediate benefit we derive from our labours, affords us reasons enough to look upon them with satisfaction.

24. The language of dissatisfaction is still continued. It being taken for granted that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy himself, without regard to posterity, it is not in every man's power to do it; but God will grant it to him, or not, as he pleases.

25. Of this he had ample experience, having had many species of enjoyment, and yet had no satisfaction in any of them:

26. Every thing depending on the providence of God, to those whom he approves he gives happiness as well as wisdom and knowledge; but to the wicked he gives the trouble and anxiety of collecting what they cannot enjoy themselves, and what will in due time come into the possession of better men, which is a vexation to them when they reflect upon it. This is the common interpretation of the passage. But as the complaint of every thing being vanity and vexation of spirit is adopted by the writer of this book, I do not see the propriety of the remark in this place. It may therefore, perhaps be understood of the sinner having the satisfaction of disposing at his pleasure of what he has laboured to acquire, and therefore of enjoying himself as much as the righteous man; tho' what he does thus dispose of, and cannot enjoy himself, will be given as
God

God, in the course of his providence, shall direct, and to those whom he will approve.

Ch. III. 1. Having shewn the vanity of all the pursuits of men, and that there is nothing new under the sun, he seems to enlarge upon the observation ; in saying that there is a certain period in all things, so that the same appearances return regularly in their course, and will do so till the end of time.

9. These things having their certain periods, it must be in vain to expect any thing new. We can only have every thing in its proper season.

10. This order of things is, no doubt, wisely ordained by God ; but tho' this is open to the observation of man, he can never fully comprehend the design of God in it:

13. This being the case, it is in vain to speculate on the subject, and it is our wisdom to enjoy what is before us.

14. The order of things established by infinite wisdom is unchangeable. We must, therefore, acquiesce in it, and adore where we cannot understand.

15. It is by the appointment of God that all things are subject to these regular changes, in which whatever has been will come again in its turn.

17. But as there is a time for all things, he concludes that there will be a time when God will distinguish between the righteous and the wicked ; and that after a season of vice and oppression, the time for judgment will also come.

18. In the mean time there is no apparent difference
between

between the condition of man, and that of the brute beasts.

21. What difference is there between the breath of life in man, and that which animates a beast, except that the one breaths upwards, and the other downwards?

22. Since, then, futurity is known only to God; and his ways, and the time of his judging men, are unknown to us, it is best for men not to speculate about it, but, doing their duty, thankfully to enjoy what is before them.

It seems evident from v. 17. of this chapter, and from several of the observations that are yet to come before us, that Solomon expected a future judgement, tho' he is not explicit on the subject. Why else does he so seriously inculcate a regard to the commands of God, and the fear of him, and recommend a life of piety and virtue before that of vice and wickedness, when by his own confession all things in this world fall alike to all?

Ch. IV. 4. In this life the poor are often oppressed by the rich, and the rich and successful are envied and hated by others; so that there is nothing very desirable in the condition of either of them.

5. Some persons reduce themselves to poverty by their idleness.

6. Poverty is preferable to riches acquired with the labour and vexation by which they are sometimes acquired.

8. But the covetous man, who can neither enjoy his acquisitions, nor leave them to any person for whose interest

interest he feels any concern, acts the most absurdly of all.

12. Having shewn the folly of a man labouring to get riches for himself only, he shews the advantages that men derive from the concurrence of others.

14. The advantage even of royalty is not always great. For unless a king be a wise man, his condition may be worse than that of the poor. Some rise from the lowest state of affliction, even from a prison, to that of a king; while some who are born to principalities lose all their possessions.

16. There is much obscurity in these two verses, but the object of the writer was to show the infelicity of princes. The meaning may be that the next heir to the crown is more courted than the reigning prince, but that he will be as much neglected in his turn.

Ch. V. The greatest part of this chapter consists of sayings which have no apparent connection with the general subject of this book, and might as well have been inserted in that of Proverbs.

1. The Hebrews, as a mark of reverence, attended in the temple with bare feet, as the Mahometans now do in their mosques. Sacred hymns were always sung during the performance of sacrifice. To attend to these was of more consequence than the mere business of sacrificing, which, unless it proceeded from a proper disposition of mind, was of no avail.

2. This is an excellent precept of piety, and could only proceed from more knowledge of God, and a greater reverence for him, than any heathen ever attained to.

6 After

6. After the miscellaneous observations in the preceding chapter, the writer resumes his complaints of the vanity of the world.

8. This is an obscure verse. It must have been intended to express the little advantage that wise men have over fools ; and if a poor man be wise, his condition is not inferior to that of any person.

9. Present enjoyment is better than a state of expectation.

10. Whatever any man may attain to, he is but a man, and therefore a weak dependent being ; but the sense is far from being clear.

12. Could men foresee what would become of their acquisitions of any kind, they would have little enjoyment of their labours.

Ch. VII. There is an air of melancholy and dissatisfaction with every thing in this chapter.

4. This, to appearance, is not of a piece with the writer's frequent exhortations to enjoy the present moment ; but when the seemingly opposite advices are well understood, they are sufficiently consistent, and shew that the design of the writer was moral and judicious. Sober and useful reflections will be suggested in the house of mourning; and the enjoyment of life, by persons whose minds are thus seasoned, will be temperate and lasting;

7. The sense would be rather better, and more consistent, if by *oppression* be meant *the power of the oppressor*. This power, and the temptation of presents, to which the great and the powerful are exposed, corrupt the best dispositions.

10 In

10. In the opinion of Solomon mankind and the world in general, did not degenerate, tho' many persons in his time thought so. There is a change in vices as well as in fashions, and a real degeneracy in some periods; but where there is an increase of knowledge, it may be presumed that, upon the whole, there will be improvement in virtue, as well as with respect to other things.

11. Wisdom is as valuable as an inheritance.

14. God grants to all men a share of prosperity and of adversity, that they may have no cause to complain of his proceeding. This is agreeable to the antient versions.

16. That is, why shouldest thou be left alone, in consequence of affecting more wisdom and virtue than others.

Be not too strict, or severe, in the exercise of justice, neither set up thyself, or be conceited of thy own wisdom. GALE.

18. The frequent recommendation of the fear of God in this book shews the excellent moral design of the writer, though some passages have been construed differently.

28. This might be the case with the thousand wives and concubines of Solomon, or he might say this in a fit of chagrin and disappointment; but certainly the moral character of women in general is as good as that of men, and from the habits of domestic life they are free from many of the vices to which men are addicted.

29 To

29. To whatever vices men or women are addicted, the fault is not in their maker. Men, as well as the other works of God, are made perfect in their kind.

Ch. VIII. 67. The misery of man is great because he cannot foresee what will happen, and therefore cannot guard against it.

9. *A time is wanting in the LXX and in one MS.*

10. And they were perceived in the city. MSS. and LXX.

This is variously rendered in the antient versions. The sense of *the place of the holy* seems quite uncertain. Le Clerc renders it, *They who came from the holy place were soon forgotten in the city in which they had behaved themselves well.*

13. It is evident from this that Solomon believed in a righteous administration of providence, tho' the time of retribution was not in the present life.

14. By *vanity* he means a thing to be complained of, and that staggers men, what he could not easily reconcile to his idea of the wisdom and justice of God, tho' he believed that in time they would be manifest to all.

17. There is something so mysterious in the ways of providence with respect to the treatment of the righteous and the wicked, that they are incomprehensible to man. He therefore concludes that it is best to lay aside all anxiety on the subject, and enjoy what we find of good in life, always fearing God, and doing our duty, waiting for his time of retribution.

Ch. IX. 6. Some suppose that this language, which may be interpreted to favour licentiousness, is that of
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a libertine, introduced as a speaker in this place; but it is so much of a piece with many other observations in this book, that I cannot help thinking it to be Solomon's own language, describing the course of providence in this life; but with a reference to a future state, tho' it is not at all times distinctly mentioned. His argument in other places necessarily requires it. That the dead know not any thing is very consistent with a belief of a resurrection and day of judgment at a future period.

9—*All the days of thy vanity* are omitted in the LXX, and in some MSS, and in others the preceeding clause of the same signification.

18. These observations shew a dissatisfaction with the ways of providence in this world, as being incomprehensible by man; but still here, as in other places, the writer recommends the cultivation of wisdom and virtue as the best for man in all situations.

Ch. X. The observations in this chapter, and many of those in the next, are of a very miscellaneous nature, like the Proverbs, and have no relation to the particular object of this book.

1. As so small a substance as a fly will spoil a pot of precious ointment, so one foolish action will greatly injure the character of a man who has acquired a reputation for wisdom, and who will on that account be more exposed to observation and censure.

2. As men generally use the right hand to more advantage than they do the left, so to have the heart in the right hand may signify the good use a man makes of his
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his understanding, and to have it in the left, may signify the contrary.

7. The sudden elevation of men in a low station is apt to make them insolent. In the East horses are chiefly used for parade in ceremony, and then the rider is attended by many servants who walk.

11. If the serpent bite notwithstanding the enchantment, there is no advantage in the inchanter. So the passage may be rendered.

15. The phrase *to go to the city*, seems to have been a proverbial expression to denote something that was very easy, there being no difficulty in a man's finding his way to a great city.

Ch. XI. 1. This is generally, and properly enough, interpreted of giving to the poor, as what is so given will be found not to have been thrown away. But it may have been said to encourage commerce and navigation. The former sense, however, is favoured by the next verse.

3. Be liberal as the clouds, which empty themselves upon the earth. The meaning of the next clause is not so obvious: As the rain when fallen cannot be gathered up again, and when a tree falls it is not easily removed, so when a thing is once done, it cannot be undone.

9. Here seems to be a plain reference to a future judgment; and indeed without this the many exhortations to piety in this book would have no foundation.

10. Remove anger and every evil affection from
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thy heart. They are indications of a light and weak mind, like that of a child.

Ch. XII. This chapter contains many serious and excellent advices, especially to make good use of the season of youth, with a view to the infirmities of old age. But the description of age in the metaphorical language of this writer, is very difficult to be understood.

2. That is while every thing is cheerful, unmixed with sorrow.

3. This verse and the following seem to have a reference to the various calamities to which men are subject, and not a mere description of the infirmities of age. Some of the images seem to be descriptive of a city distressed by a plague, which renders it almost deserted. But the meaning of the particular expressions is so very uncertain, that I shall not attempt to explain them.

The word here rendered *desire* is said to be the *Caper tree*, the fruit of which is used as a sauce to whet the appetite, the failure of which is hereby denoted.

7. Whatever be the meaning of the preceding metaphors, the end of the scene is *death*, when man, who was made out of earth, becomes mere earth again, and the breath of life, which was infused into it by God, returns to him who gave it. In the psalms death is denoted by God's *taking away men's breath*. The ancients in general considered the breath not as a part of the common atmosphere, but something that was alternately thrown out and drawn into an animal, and which

which intirely escaped at death. Hence the endeavour to catch the last breath of friends. *

11. There is much difficulty in this verse. That the words of the wise may be compared to *goads*, which stimulate men to their duty, or to *nails*, or pins, which are driven deep into the ground, is pretty plain.

12. That is, perhaps, be satisfied with the instruction which you will find in these sayings of mine.

14. If there be any meaning in this language, it seems to be very evident that Solomon must have believed in a future state of righteous retribution. In this life he frequently acknowledges it was not to be found.

NOTES ON

SOLOMON'S SONG.

THIS book is not doubted to have been written by Solomon, on occasion of his marriage, with the daughter of the king of Egypt. It is the most difficult, but, happily, the least important, of all the books in the Jewish canon. Indeed, there is nothing to recommend it to a place in such a collection but its being the work of Solomon, since there is nothing relating to *religion* in it. All the attempts that have been made to give it a spiritual meaning have only served to throw ridicule on those who have undertaken it.

The writer who has thrown the most light on this book is Mr. Harmer, in his *Outline of a Commentary* upon it, and him I chiefly follow in these Notes, tho' I am far from being satisfied with all his ingenious illustrations. All the commentators agree that this book is written in dialogues, and that there are at least two speakers, the bride and the bridegroom, as well as a chorus of women. But Mr. Harmer supposes that there are two choruses, one of the women accompanying the bride, and the other of those that went to meet
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her on the part of the bridegroom ; and besides these he supposes that a former and a principal wife, or queen, of Solomon is frequently introduced ; and that he had a wife before he married the daughter of Pharaoh is evident from the age of his son Rehoboam, which shews that he was married before the death of his father.

According to the customs of the East, how many wives soever a man may have ; there is one that has privileges above the rest ; and in the royal family she is styled *the queen*, as was Vashti and Esther in the court of the king of Persia. This Jewish queen Mr. Harmer supposes to have taken umbrage at the introduction of this new wife, as more likely to encroach upon her prerogatives than any other that he might have married. She is, therefore, according to Mr. Harmer, a principal speaker in the poem.

It is the custom in the East for a company of unmarried women to go in procession to conduct the bride to the house of the bridegroom, and they are frequently met by another company attending on the bride, each of them singing songs in praise of the parties. When they arrived at the place prepared for their reception, the bride is presented in a great variety of rich dresses to the bridegroom ; after which the marriage is consummated, and then the bridegroom joins his male friends, who were feasting, and spends the remainder of the night with them.

Ch. I. 2. This poem is supposed by Mr. Harmer to open with the song of the young women who attended

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the bride coming from Egypt, and which is continued to the end of the 7th verse, when they are answered by another chorus of women from Jerusalem, who went to receive her. They are supposed to speak in her name, which takes something from the seeming indelicacy of the first expressions; but does not, I think, leave it free from very just objection; tho' no doubt, nothing of the kind would have been inserted if it had really shocked the ideas of the country.

3. That is, precious as perfumes are, his name was more so. She was proud of such an alliance.

4. This should be rendered *the king is bringing me into his chambers*; for she had not at that time entered the royal tent prepared for her reception, which was probably in some convenient place of encampment, where the two companies met.

5. This may refer to her complexion having suffered by so long a journey over burning sands; and tho' she was thus become black, or tanned, she might be really beautiful, as were the black tents of some of the Arabs, and the rich pavillion of Solomon. But the original Egyptians are thought by many to have been properly black, and in other respects to have been nearly the same with the negroes.

6. *Be not afraid of me.* MSS.

Her mother's children Mr. Harmer supposes may signify her countrymen, who promoted their interest by her marriage, at the risk of her happiness.

7. This is supposed to be the last part of the song of the Egyptian women, inquiring where they were to be received.

8 With

8. With this verse begins what was sung by the company of women from Jerusalem.

9. Theocritus, in a Greek epithalamium, has made use of this comparison, uncouth as it appears to us. He describes the lady as plump and large.

10. Among other oriental ornaments, the face is sometimes almost covered with pearls and jewels.

11. With this verse Mr. Harmer supposes the songs of the two companies of women to end. What they here propose to do was probably to put on her head the royal crown, of which we have here a description.

12. This probably describes the presentation of the bride to the bridegroom, in order to which she was perfumed, as well as adorned. It should, therefore, probably be rendered until *the king sit at his table*; this being done before the bridegroom appeared; and instead of *at his table* it should be *in his circle*, or accompanied by his friends.

13. This verse and the following may be a reply of the bride to what precedes, signifying the king himself will be my perfume. I need no other; and instead of *he shall lie*, it may be *it shall lie* (meaning the box of perfume shall lie) between my breasts, in order to impart its virtues more effectually. For in the East women wore such boxes suspended from the neck. Or it may mean that the bridegroom would be to her like a vessel of myrrh, such as was usually placed in the bosom.

14. Instead of *camphire* it is supposed that the *al-henna* was intended, this plant being cultivated, especially in Egypt, on account of the sweet scent of its flowers.

15. The three last verses of this chapter may contain the conversation of the bridegroom and the bride, previous to their setting out for Jerusalem. The eyes of the bride being compared to those of the *dove* may be intended to express kindness and gentleness. In general the eyes of oriental beauties are compared to those of the antelope, which are large and black.

16. In this verse the bride is supposed to describe the beauty of the place in which they were, by way of modest reluctance to proceed any farther. By *bed* is to be understood *carpet*.

17. To this the bridegroom replies, that he had a noble palace for her reception in Jerusalem.

Ch. II. 1. This chapter is supposed to open with a speech of a former wife to Solomon in the language of humility, comparing herself to the most common flowers.

2. This is thought to be the soothing language of Solomon, in praise of her; what she said being in a tone of complaint.

Mr. Harmer supposed the *eglantine* to be meant by the word here rendered *lilly*. The same flower furnished an ornament for the temple of Solomon. 1 Kings vii, 19, &c.

3. What is here rendered the *apple* tree should be the *citron*, on the authority of the Chaldee paraphrase. In this verse and the following Solomon is supposed to be absent, and what is in the present tense v. 6, may be rendered in the past, describing the affectionate manner in which she had been treated by him.

5 The

5. The fainting described in this verse is supposed by Mr. Harmer to proceed from apprehension and jealousy.

7. These words occur three times in this song viz. at Ch. iii, 5, and viii, 4.

9. Here the Jewish queen is represented as being in an arbour made of lattice work, and covered with vines, accompanied by Solomon, who was amusing himself with looking into the garden.

10. This must have been in the middle of April Old Style, or before the end of May, when there is no apprehension of danger from the dew in the climate of Palestine.

13. The rose tree and the vine blossom about the same time of the year, probably about the end of April, in Palestine ; which fixes the time of this marriage.

14. this is the soothing language of Solomon to his former queen. Doves frequent rocks in the East, and the word that is here rendered *stairs* is in Ez. xxxviii, 20, *steep places* ; so that it probably means the cliffs of rocks.

15. *The foxes* are not in the LXX, nor in several MSS.

It is probable that they were jackals and not foxes that are here meant. They spoiled the garden by trampling on the flowers, and eating some of the fruits ; and also made a great disturbance by their melancholy howling.

16. This is thought to be a delicate way of saying that Solomon cohabited with his other wives.

17. This is thought to be an allusion to the swiftness

ness of a deer when pursued by hawks, which are trained to attack them about the eyes, by which means they often become a more easy prey to the hunters, who employ both dogs and hawks for this purpose. She invites him to return to her, as, being his proper queen, he was in reason bound to do.

Ch. III. 1. This is supposed to be the language of Solomon's former wife, complaining of his absence.

2—3. The night in which she misses him is supposed to be that of the festival on account of the new marriage, with which she had not been made acquainted.

4. Her being at her mother's house seems to imply a previous separation, probably on account of jealousy, having taken offence at this new marriage.

6. This is a description of the approach of the daughter of Pharaoh, perfumed and anointed, in a proper manner to meet the bridegroom.

7. What is here rendered *bed* was probably the *litter*, or *palanquin*, which Solomon had prepared for his bride.

8. These nuptial processions being generally in the night, it was often necessary to be attended with armed men, to guard them from the attacks of enemies, who sometimes laid in wait to interrupt the festivity. An instance of this kind occurs in the book of Maccabees.

10. This being a description of a royal palanquin, the phrase *paved with love*, may mean sentences relating to the passion of love embroidered on the carpet, with which the floor and the sides of it were covered.

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It is customary with the Mahometans to ornament their houses in this manner.

Ch. IV. 1. From this verse to the 11th is supposed to be the song of the women from Jerusalem, marching before the bride, as she was conveyed to the palace of Solomon. Bochart explains this of the hair of the eastern goats, which is of a most delicate silky softness, and of a dark brown colour.

3. The word here translated *temples* is by the LXX more properly rendered *cheeks*, the pomegranate resembling a beautiful one.

8. The places here mentioned are too remote from the scene of the transaction to be understood of the places where the bride actually was, or had been ; but must be understood in some figurative sense, as places of known danger. He therefore says that she should avoid every place in which he was not ; but that with him she would find protection and safety. Mr. Harmer supposes that the verses before this were sung before the marriage, but that this and the following were recited after it.

9. This is thought to describe the graceful modesty of the bride, in turning her face from the bridegroom ; so that he had a view of no more than one half of her face. Tertullian mentions a custom of women, in conversation, uncovering only one eye when they wore veils. Niebuhr mentions the same custom as usual in Arabia.

12. This is supposed to be a delicate way of saying that he found his bride to be a virgin.

14 The

14. The trees here mentioned says Mr. Harmer p. 294, are all of the frankincense kind, the myrrh kind, and the aloe kind ; and do not, he says, trees of the aloe kind mean trees whose wood when burned give a very fragrant scent, those of the frankincense kind those that produce gums, which when thrown upon coals make a delicious smoke ; and those of the myrrh kind such as yield odoriferous liquids or balsams ; and do not the chief spices that are mentioned afterwards mean all aromatic flowering herbs and shrubs ? But as was observed, the aloe should be the sandal wood.

15. Is there not, says Mr. Harmer, p. 299, a gradation in this verse. Doth not the term translated a *fountain of gardens*, mean a cistern, or other receptacle of rain water, the well of living waters a spring of water, and streams from Lebanon water in the greatest abundance ?

Ch. V. 1. With a very slight alteration, this will be the address of the bridegroom to his friends after the consummation of the marriage ; saying he had been in the garden of his spouse, and inviting them to rejoice with him.

2. Here it is supposed the poem returns to the former queen, representing Solomon as at the door of her mother's house, endeavouring to procure a reconciliation. For as she had failed in her endeavour to prevent the marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh, she had returned to her mother.

3. This is supposed to be a trifling excuse for not admitting him, her resentment still continuing.

7 Going

7. Going from her mother's house in pursuit of Solomon, after repenting of her treatment of him, she is met by the watchmen ; who, not knowing her, treat her rudely.

8. This verse may describe the events of the next morning ; for in the East women may freely walk the streets in the day time, but not in the night. Other women now join her in seeking her husband.

11. The meaning may be, that his head was more beautiful than that of other men, as gold is more precious than other metals.

12. The eyes of the doves of Syria, especially those of the carrier are peculiarly beautiful.

13. *Spices* probably here means *roses*, to which the colour of the cheeks is usually compared ; but the word *bed* should rather be rendered *furrow*, or such a trench as is made in the Eastern gardens to convey water to particular trees or beds. So the same word is rendered in Ex. vii, 10 ; and instead of *lilies* it should be *roses* the fragrance of which was always most admired.

14. It is very uncertain what precious stone is meant here. In the Hebrew it is the stone of Tarshish ; being probably brought from that country.

15. By *his belly* is not to be understood any part of his naked body, but his *robe* with which it was covered. Also the description of his legs must be that of the dress which covered them, denoting that his sandals were bound with golden ribbons. By his hands being as golden rings set with beryls, must be understood that bracelets set with jewels were on his wrists.

Ch.

Ch. VI. 1. The former queen is now in pursuit of the bridegroom, accompanied by other women.

2. This is supposed to refer to Solomon's cohabiting with his other wives.

3. In this she expresses her claim to his particular affection, notwithstanding his dereliction of her.

4. Here the scene is supposed to change to the Egyptian princess, and for *terrible* it should be *dazzling*.

5. It is evident from this, that Solomon had several wives, as well as concubines, at the time of his marrying the daughter of Pharaoh.

10. This is supposed to express Solomon's surprise on the appearance of a person in the garden, in a splendid dress, whose coming he did not expect. Here then the Jewish queen is again introduced.

11. This is thought to be said by Solomon with a forbidding air, which disconcerted the queen, and made her turn back. The nuts here mentioned were probably walnuts, the walnut tree being much esteemed in the East both for its fruit and its shade.

13. Mr. Harmer thinks p. 325, that this represents a person not being able to stand an interview which had been meditated, and consequently must be attributed to the Jewish queen, who proposed going to meet her lord whom she had treated in an insufferably rude manner; and might, therefore, well feel her heart fail her according to the eleventh verse, and cause her to hurry back with precipitation, and with a pace like that of a chariot drawn furiously. Does not the last clause of this verse, he says, describe the amicable
junction

junction of two friendly companies, rather than the conflict of two armies?

The word *Shulamith* may from its derivation, signify an inhabitant of Jerusalem, or the wife of Solomon.

Ch. VII. 1. 2. This chapter opens with a description of the dress of the Jewish queen. What is here awkwardly rendered the *joints of the thighs*, means the dress of that part of her body which was fastened with a jewel in the form of a round goblet, or cup, so formed as to appear full of liquor; which might be effected by a proper disposition of precious stones.

3. According to the version of Houbigant, this should be *the hair of thy head is like the purple of the king fastened from the cieling*, that is, like the purple curtains, which hang in magnificent festoons from the ceiling of the palace; or perhaps from the throne of Solomon, shading and ornamenting his head in a graceful manner. His being *held in the galleries* may signify the attention of Solomon fixed upon the queen with pleasure, as observed by the courtiers, who wished to bring about a reconciliation between them.

7. The palm tree is remarkable for its height and straitness; and it seems to have had some peculiar relation to Judea, being stamped on the Roman coins which represent that province.

8. This language of Solomon sufficiently intimates his purpose not to cast her off, but to treat her as his favourite wife.

10. This is language of joy and exultation on the favourable sentiments of Solomon towards her, but she seems to desire that it might be shewn in some country

try retirement, and not in the presence of the Egyptian queen.

12. From this it appears that the scene of this transaction was in the latter end of April.

13. The mention of *mandrakes* may intimate that if she could prevail upon her husband to withdraw with her to the country seat, she might bring him a son; this plant, tho' of an unpleasant smell, being thought favourable to conception; for which purpose it was put under the bed.

Ch. VIII. 1. This chapter is thought to open with a complaint of the Jewish queen, who considered herself as despised on account of the preference given to Pharaoh's daughter.

2. Chardin says that much wine is still made from the juice of pomgranates in the East.

They should not despise thee. MSS.

4. This is the third time that this language occurs in the poem.

5. This is thought to express her anxiety about the arrival of the Egyptian bride; and the latter part of the verse may represent Solomon reminding her of the favour he had always shewn her, and that he had pledged himself to her mother that he would never do any thing that could give her any anxiety or distress. For it ought to have been rendered *her mother that bare her received a pledge for her.*

6. Still, however, she expresses her jealousy of the new queen, and enlarges on the misery which that passion occasions.

8. These are supposed to be the words of the Jewish queen

queen, respecting the Egyptian princess ; as, in her opinion, too young to be married, and asking in what manner she was to be treated, when her rank should be settled, and when, of course, she would be much spoken of.

9. This is supposed to be the reply of Solomon, saying, in figurative language, that the Egyptian princess was to be treated in the most distinguished manner. *Is she not a wall*, for so it may be rendered, *We will build upon her a palace of silver. Is she not a door. We will inclose her with boards of cedar.* She is compared to a wall, as Solomon's marrying her was a guard and defence to his country to the South, and it was a door, as it opened to a freer communication with Egypt.

10. 11. Here the Egyptian princess is introduced as saying, I am, indeed a wall to Israel: My breasts are likewise grown, like the towers of a wall ; and not unmarriageable. Large breasts, and corpulency in general are much admired in the East.

11. 12. This *Baal hammon* was probably a place in which Solomon had a vineyard ; but this princess speaks of the possessions she brought to Solomon as of equal value to him.

13. This again is thought by Mr. Harmer to be the speech of the Jewish queen, saying that every person was listening to what he would say. Let me, therefore, have your final answer.

14. In this Solomon is thought to express his resolution to keep her at some distance, but not to renounce his relation to her as his principal wife. In this Mr. Harmer thinks that some hope is expressed, that the

breach might be made up hereafter, founded on the gentleness with which he treated her. But the whole of this interpretation appears to me extremely uncertain. Too much of it consists of mere conjecture.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

I S A I A H.

ISAIAH is generally thought to have been of the royal family of Judah. That he was of great consideration appears from his being consulted by Hezekiah on the invasion of Sennacherib. He must have exercised the prophetic office about sixty years, from the last of Uzziah to the end of that of Hezekiah; and there is a Jewish tradition, not at all improbable, that he was put to death in the reign of Manasseh by being sawn between two boards; and to this it is thought that Paul alludes when he says of some of the ancient worthies, Heb. xi, 37, that *they were sawn asunder*.

There is more of the sublime in the writings of Isaiah, than in those of any other of the prophets, and he dwells

dwells more than any of them on the great and animating subject of the flourishing and happy state of the Hebrew nation in the latter days; tho', like all the other prophets, he did not fail to inveigh against the degeneracy of the age in which he lived, exhorting to repentance and reformation, in order to prevent, or alleviate, the judgments with which they were threatened. His mission also extended to the neighbouring nations, whose fates he predicted.

Ch. I. 1. The prophet begins his book with a complaint of the degeneracy of his countrymen notwithstanding the great things that God had done for them:

7. This was probably delivered either towards the end of the reign of Jotham, when it is said, 2 Kings xv, 27, that *God sent against Judah Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel*, or in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, when the country, besides being ravaged by the Syrians, and Israelites, suffered by the invasion of the Philistines and Edomites. 2 Chron. xxviii, 17.

8. To preserve their fruit from the jackals and foxes, they had temporary booths, which made but a mean appearance in their gardens.

10. Having mentioned the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, the prophet, by a bold figure of speech, addresseth his countrymen by the appellation of the people of Gomorrah.

11. This is a most animated exhortation to the practice of substantial virtue, expressing in the strongest terms the insignificance of the ritual part of religion without it. Such sentiments are frequent in the scriptures.

tures, but nothing like them is found in the writings of the heathens.

22. As wine was adulterated, and its quality debased, by mixing it with water; so had the Israelites lost their former virtue, and were become degenerate. In the East wine is generally drunk pure, and water taken by itself. When mention is made of *mixed wines* in the scriptures, it is to be understood of wine in which spices, and other ingredients to make it more intoxicating, are mixed with it.

24. This is a general prediction of the calamity that would befall the nation for their degeneracy, and of the happiness that was reserved for them in some future period, on both of which, but especially the latter, he enlarges in the course of this book.

25 By the word rendered *in* Bishop Lowth supposes *alley* in general to be meant.

29. The heathens had groves of shady trees near their temples. These the Israelites were expressly ordered to cut down; but when they relapsed into idolatry they made use of the same; and in these sacred groves all the abominations that were countenanced by the heathen religions were committed. Here they are apprized that they would suffer for their addictedness to this mode of worship, when they themselves would be made to resemble these trees stripped of their leaves, and gardens without water, their country being in a state of desolation. In the hot Eastern climates nothing is more coveted than gardens planted with shady trees, and well watered. Bishop Lowth, supposing with great probability

probability that an *evergreen* was intended by the word here rendered *oaks*, thinks that it was the *ilex*.

51. Neither their own power, nor that of the gods they served, would avail them against the anger of the Almighty. The strong men among them would be like ~~flax~~ *flax*, and their idolatrous rites as fire, which would be the means of consuming them. Nothing is more easily fired, or burns with greater fierceness, than dry flax.

Ch. II. 1. This chapter and the two following relate to one subject, and it is the great burden of all Isaiah's prophecies, viz. the future prosperous state of his nation, and the calamity that would precede it on account of their depravity. They were probably delivered in a season of outward prosperity, as in the time of Jotham, and before the calamity that befel the country afterwards.

These three verses are nearly the same with a passage in Micah Ch. iv. 1, &c. which of these prophets borrowed from the other is not certain, as they were cotemporaries. It was probably a well known, as it was a favourite, prediction. It is, indeed, of the most interesting nature, announcing a state of universal peace, and the preeminence of the Israelites to all other nations, as their instructors in religion. Nothing farther is intimated in this place.

6. The object of a great part of the heathen religion was to pry into futurity by various modes of divination, and it should seem, from this passage, that many of the Israelites intermarried with idolatrous nations. As Ahab married Jezebel, a daughter of the king of Tyre.

7. This circumstance indicates a season of peace and great prosperity. The kings of Israel were particularly forbidden to multiply horses, and yet this was done by Solomon, and also by Uzziah.

8. Tho' both Uzziah and Jotham suppressed idolatry, it was, no doubt, practised by many in private, especially, as it had been countenanced by some of the former kings.

10. The clause *when he shall arise to strike the earth with terror* is added in this place from the antient versions. It occurs again v. 19. It appears to me to announce great convulsions, not in the land of Palestine only, but in many parts of the world, agreeably to many other prophecies, as that of Haggai ii, 2. *I will shake all nations.*

16. From this highly figurative description we are led to expect the overthrow of all the great powers of the world, the maritime ones as well as others.

21. The effect of these convulsions will be an universal conviction of the truth of religion, and an end of all the forms of false worship.

22. This verse is not in the LXX, and is probably an interpolation. C.

Ch. III. 3. This seems to be a prophecy of the total dissolution of the Hebrew government, but no particular time is mentioned. It was fulfilled in the Babylonish Captivity, and the subjection of the nation to the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, afterwards.

4. This was fulfilled in the weak and wicked princes who reigned after Hezekiah.

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7. So low would be the state of the Hebrew nation, that no person would be found who would undertake to be their prince; none being able to support the expence of that dignity. This does not appear to have been fulfilled literally; but the affairs of the Jews have now for many centuries been much lower than this circumstance implies; being without any thought of a prince of their own nation, and oppressed by all other nations.

10. The reading in the Hebrew is probably corrupted. The sense here given is agreeable to the ancient versions as they stood soon after the time of Christ. If it be right, it seems to be an allusion to the character of Jesus, emphatically called *the just one*, in three passages of the New Testament, Acts, iii, 14, vii, 5. James, v, 6. very probably from this passage being supposed to relate to him.

16. Here is an enumeration of several ornaments used by women in the East, in order to exhibit a contrast between the appearance they made in the time of the prophet, and that which they would make afterwards. All the articles here enumerated that we can understand, are in use in some parts of the East at this day. The painting of the eyes is the putting a fine powder of lead ore between the eye lashes upon the ball of the eye. The nose is perforated for the hanging of an ornament on the upper lip, and rings or chains, that make a noise when they walk, are fastened to the ancles. Instead of these and other ornaments, and the effeminate life led by those who wore them, they would experience a dreadful reverse when they would come under the power of their enemies. Then many of them,

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without any regard to distinction of sex, would be driven in crowds from their own country to a distant one, and often quite naked, than which nothing is more opprobrious and offensive, even to men, in the East, and infinitely so to women, who never appear without veils, except to their nearest relations.

22. Mr. Bruce says that in Abyssinia they curl their hair with a wooden stick, by which they lay hold of the locks, and twist them into what forms they please. Such were probably the *crisping pins* here mentioned.

24. Great use was made of delicate and costly perfumes, which they applied after bathing. This we see in the history of Esther. Instead of this their bodies would be covered with filthy ulcers, than which nothing was deemed more loathsome.

26. Sitting on the ground, with the eyes fixed upon it, is the posture by which deep grief is represented in some oriental medals. Sometimes they not only sat on the bare ground, but on ashes, or a dunghill. They also threw ashes and earth on their heads, to express sorrow.

Ch. IV. 1. So great would be the destruction of men, that many women would be content to have one husband, and without claiming the rights of wives, merely that they might not lie under the reproach of living single. And, contrary to the natural modesty of the sex, they would even use importunity to be taken for wives. Here the prophet announces a state of great prosperity and glory for the few who would escape the preceding calamity; and as a foundation for this, they would

would be thoroughly reformed from the vices which had brought the wrath of God upon them.

2. Tho' the *tree*, which represents the nation, would be in a great measure destroyed, a *root*, or a *branch*, would remain, from which it would revive. It does not appear that in this place any single person is intended by the *root*, but the nation in general. Afterwards we find mention made of *a branch from the stock of Jesse*, or David, representing some particular person, who is to be descended from him, and to be at the head of the nation at their return from their last dispersion.

4. They would be purified as by fire, a comparison frequently made use of for this purpose; the people being compared to an impure metal, which is refined, and the dross destroyed, in the furnace.

5. God will manifest his presence with them as in former times, when they were led through the wilderness by a pillar of a cloud in the day and of fire in the night; and this would be their protection from all danger, like a tent covering them from the heat of the sun, and from rain.

Ch. V. In this chapter the prophet begins with a striking allegory, calculated to reprove the people for their degeneracy, and denouncing heavy judgments against them on that account. In the first part the Divine Being is the speaker, and afterwards the prophet.

2. The vineyard was furnished in the most ample manner, with every thing both for safety and convenience. One of our Saviours parables resembles this of Isaiah, Matt. xxi, 33. Mark xii, 1. Buildings of a permanent nature, as well as for temporary use, are often

erected in gardens in the East. Some of them might contain every utensil for the making of wine. There is a plant that is apt to grow in vineyards resembling the vine, but its berries are noxious.

7. There is a great resemblance between the Hebrew words signifying *judgment*, and *tyranny*, and also the words translated *righteousness* and a *cry*; and this was considered as a great beauty in composition.

10. As a punishment for their covetousness in multiplying their buildings, and increasing their possessions, it is here foretold that their houses would be uninhabited, and their lands become a desert.

11. By *strong drink*, was probably meant the fermented juice of dates.

12. There is a passage in Amos, vi, 3. which very much resembles this. They were cotemporary writers, and described the same state of things.

17. The fields which they had inclosed would become an open pasture.

18. The allusion may be either to the business of a rope maker, who draws his rope to a great length from its being very short, or to the great labour to which wicked men sometimes put themselves to gain their object.

19. This is the language of open profaneness, calling for divine judgments by way of derision.

26. In addition to the judgments with which they would be afflicted internally, and by which they were not reformed, the Divine Being would employ a foreign enemy, the terror of whose invasion is described in very emphatical language. They who keep bees in
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the East are said to drive them out of their hives, and lead them back again, by a hiss, or whistle. LOWTH.

28. Horses are not shod in the East, as with us ; and therefore a hard hoof was a great recommendation of a horse.

30. Wherever they should look, upwards or downwards, nothing would meet their eye but what would inspire terror and despair.

Ch. VI. This must have been among the first, if not the very first, of the visions of this prophet. For the parts of this book are by no means arranged in the order of time. This appearance of the Divine Being was probably the same with that in the wilderness, viz. a luminous cloud.

2. As this symbol of the divine presence was upon the ark, here called his throne, and the cherubims stretched their wings over it, those that are here called *Seraphim*, are said to be *over him*. They were, no doubt, emblematical figures, of the same nature with the Cherubim, tho' they differ in the number of their wings. As attending the throne of God, and executing his commands, they might represent angels.

5. The apprehension of danger from the presence of God, or that of persons of eminent sanctity, seems to have been universal. It frequently occurs both in the Old and the New Testament.

7. The significancy of this emblem of a live coal applied to the mouth, is not very apparent. Fire indeed purifies, but not when used in this manner.

9. Tho' he was to admonish the people, he was apprized that his exhortations would not be much attend-

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ed to, through the prejudice and obstinacy of those to whom they were addressed. This was the case of the Jews in general in the time of our Saviour, who quotes this passage as applicable to them.

11. Tho' this threatening was in part fulfilled at the Babylonish captivity, it was not in its full extent till the last dispersion of the Jews by Adrian, when they were entirely expelled from their country, none being permitted to remain in it.

Notwithstanding this dispersion, and the repeated destructions that would be made of the people, a small remnant would always remain. And this we see wonderfully verified. The Jews are at this time a numerous people; and whenever they return to their own country, they will probably be in sufficient numbers to occupy the whole of it. The teil tree probably means the turpentine, or linden tree. Its leaf resembles that of a laurel.

Ch. VII. 1. It should seem that in the latter days of Jotham, Pekay king of Israel, and Rezin king of Syria, entered into a confederacy against Judah; because it is said, after an account of the reign of Jotham, 2 Kings, xv, 37, *In those days the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remalish, and immediately after this it is said, and Jotham slept with his fathers.* But the 37th verse seems to have been inserted by way of parenthesis after the preceding and following verses were written. For such a clause as the 36th verse, viz. *the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah* (which occur at the close

close of every reign) always immediately precedes the account of the death and burial, such as we find v. 38. *And Jotham slept with his fathers, &c.* As Jotham is said to have been a pious prince, and very prosperous (for it is said, 2 Chron. xxvi, 6, *Now Jotham became mighty because he prepared the way before the Lord his God*) and nothing is here hinted concerning any misfortune befalling him, I am inclined to think that the confederacy was not formed till the beginning of the reign of Ahaz. It is evident, however, that nothing was done in consequence of it till that time; but then it gave a serious alarm, as we find in this place.

2. The inability of the kings of Syria and Israel to succeed against Judah, tho' mentioned in this place, did not appear till after the prophecy which is the subject of this chapter.

3. The reason why this child was taken seems to have been on account of his name, which signified a *remnant will return*.

4. They were compared to smoking firebrands, which were extinguished, and did not flame, and therefore had no power to do mischief.

6. It is evident from the history that the success of Israel against Judah was considerable. Great numbers were slain, many captives and much spoil were taken; but their enemies did not succeed so far as to dethrone the house of David, and make a king of another family, as they had proposed.

9. This must be dated from the prediction concerning the captivity of the ten tribes by Amos, who prophesied in the reign of Jeroboam II, *two years before*

fore the earthquake, which was probably in 785 B. C. From this time to the taking of Samaria by Shalmanassar in 721 B. C. were sixty four years.

10. This looks like a warning to the people of Judah, that if they did not profit by the example of the ten tribes, they would suffer in the same manner. Similar to this was the exhortation of Jehosaphat 2 Chron. xx, 20. *Hear now O Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God and ye shall be established; believe his prophets and ye shall prosper.*

13. There must have been something in the manner in which Ahaz spake that was improper or offensive, to give a propriety to this reply. It is probable that he despaired of any relief notwithstanding what the prophet had declared, and refused to ask any confirmation of it, from a persuasion that it would answer no purpose. Milk, butter and honey are considered as delicacies in the East, and therefore denote plenty, on the restoration of peace. D'Arvieux says that one of the chief breakfasts of the Arabs is cream, or fresh butter, mixed with honey. *Fragments* Vol. ii, p. 181.

16. It does not appear who it was that was with child; but the meaning of the prophecy was, that before a child which would soon be born, and which would be called *Immanuel*, or *God with us*, should be able to distinguish between good and evil, both these kings would be no more. And as mention is made of food, the meaning probably was, that this would take place before he could distinguish wholesome and agreeable food from that which was not so, which a child
very

very soon learns. Accordingly, in the fourth year of Ahaz, Pekay was slain by Hoshea, and probably about the same time Rezin was slain by the king of Assyria. 2Kings xvi, 9. Also, tho' the country was threatened with famine, the child should eat butter and honey, intimating that there would be plenty of all things.

17. *Even the king of Assyria*, is probably an interpolation. Bishop Lowth omits them in his translation.

Tho' Judah and the house of Ahaz were promised deliverance on this occasion, they should not finally escape very severe judgments, which are here announced.

18. The enemies by whose means God would punish them would come from the most distant and opposite quarters, from the most remote part of Egypt on the one hand, and from Assyria on the other. The armies of these countries are represented by objects peculiar to each. The fly in upper Egypt, or Ethiopia, according to Mr. Bruce, is a most formidable insect. No animal can stand before it. According to him the meaning is they shall cut off from the cattle their usual retreat to the desert, by taking possession of those places, and meeting them where ordinarily they never come. *Travels* p. 390.

20. Ahaz gave money to the king of Assyria to engage him to come to his assistance, and God says that he also would hire or employ him to do his work. But tho' the country suffered much by the ravages of both the Egyptians and Assyrians, it suffered much more by the Babylonians; and this may have been intended in
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the prophecy, as Babylon was then within the Assyrian empire.

Ch VIII. 1. The prophet continues his assurances of the deliverance of Judah from the confederacy of the kings of Israel and Syria, and of the future happy times for his countrymen, under the government of the house of David.

4 It was usual to give names to children significative of any thing that they wished to remember. Two methods are here used for this purpose, viz. the engraving of the words which denoted *hastening the spoil and taking the prey*, and also giving the same words as the name of the child.

8. Siloah was a small brook near Jerusalem, and to this the forces of Judah were compared; and because they were held in contempt by those who boasted of the great power of the kings of Assyria, to whom they looked for assistance, God threatened them with suffering by that power, compared to the overflowing of a great river. Accordingly, the Assyrians completed the conquest of Israel and Syria, and greatly alarmed and endangered Judah also; but, concluding with an allusion to the name of the child mentioned in the preceding chapter, the prophet intimates that, tho' Judah would be endangered and suffer much, it would not be ruined, for *God was with it*.

10. This is a challenge to the enemies of Judah to do all that they could to ruin the country. They could not prevail, for *God was with it*.

12. This is a very difficult passage. It may perhaps refer to the confidence that some of the people placed in the
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the idols they worshipped, which are here declared to be wholly without power. For that Jehovah only was to be feared, and that his power would be their protection.

14. Tho' God, here compared to a rock, would be a sufficient fortress, and protection to all who put their trust in him; yet as the Israelites had departed from his worship, to them he would be a stone on which they would stumble and fall. — The verses 11, 12, and 13, may be considered as a parenthesis, interrupting the prophecy.

18. There is considerable difficulty with respect to the best division of the words contained in this verse. I prefer the version of Lowth. The children of the prophets were frequently made use of as signs to the people, their names being significative of what he announced from God.

19. It was manifestly absurd to inquire of the *dead*, which was the case of the heathen deities, concerning the affairs of *living men*. In opposition to these objects of worship, Jehovah is called *the living*, as well as the *true God*.

22. From this place the prophet announces the glory and happiness of future times, even to that part of the country which had suffered the most by the invasion of the Assyrians, which was Galilee, and all the North Eastern part of Palestine.

Ch. IX. 1. *But there shall not hereafter be darkness in the land which was distressed. In the former time he debased the land of Naphthali. But in the latter time he hath made it glorious.* L.

VOL. II.

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3 And

3. *And hast increased their joy.* MSS.

This seems to be a reference to such a destruction of the enemies of Israel as is announced by several other prophets, when the wood of their weapons would be used for fuel.

6. *And his name shall be called THE MESSENGER OF THE GREAT DESIGN.* LXX. This was probably an exact translation of the original.

This is evidently a reference to the Messiah, but it chiefly respects his second coming as a king, which will be the commencement of a state of permanent peace, security, and happiness. In the oriental style a person who excels in any particular quality, is called the father of that quality. Thus a famous physician much praised for his skill, was called *the father of benediction*. So here the Messiah is called *the father of eternity*, his authority being designed to be of long continuance.

7. From this verse to Ch. x, 4, is a distinct prophecy, without any necessary connection with what goes before or follows it; but the purport of it is of the same general tenor with the preceding, a threatening of divine judgments on account of the vices of the people.

11.—*The princes of Rezin.* MSS.

Assyria was to the North East, and the Philistines to the South East of Palestine. The people would, therefore, be distressed on every side; but notwithstanding this judgment something still more calamitous was reserved for them.

16. This clause occurs four times as the burden of a song.

19. They would suffer by civil dissention.

Ch. X:

Ch. X. 1. In the East persons who apply to a king or magistrate, for any thing, present their petition in writing, and then endeavour to get his signature to it.

4. i. e. be among the prisoners, and among the slain.

5. From this place to the end of Chapter xii is one discourse, representing the Assyrians (and Israel) as employed by God to execute his judgments on his people, and as afterwards reserved for greater punishment themselves; while the Israelites would be purified by their sufferings, and their last state be most glorious and happy. This prophecy must have been delivered after the taking of Samaria by Shalmanassar, which was in the sixth year of Hezekiah, and probably before the fourteenth of his reign, in which Judah was invaded by Sennacherib.

9. i. e. have any of these cities been able to withstand me?

11. As the gods of other countries had not been able to defend them from the invasion, he presumed that the God of Judah could not protect that country.

14. He had plundered all these countries of their treasures, with as much ease as a person takes eggs, or young birds, from a nest.

15. This is a striking representation of the suberviency of all the powers and designs of men to the purposes of God.

17. The Israelites, tho' so much oppressed, would hereafter be the means of the destruction of all their oppressors; as if they had been a fire, and their enemies thorns. This must refer to a time yet future.

23. From this it is most evident that the prophecy looks far beyond the time of the invasion of Senacherib; for very few perished on that occasion.

24. This part of the prophecy seems to relate to the approaching invasion of Senacherib, of whom it is foretold that, tho' he would make considerable progress in the country, going even to Jerusalem, the capital, his army would be cut off.

26. His defeat would resemble that of the Midianites by Gideon, in which more than an hundred thousand were slain.

27. With the change of a letter may this be rendered. *And the yoke shall be loosed (or broken) from before the desolater, or destroyer, i. e. by the destroying angel.*

28. This is an account of the gradual advance of the Assyrian army in the kingdom of Judah, till it came to Jerusalem.

31. In this prophetic description of the march of the army there is an allusion to some, if not to all, the names of the places through which they passed. Thus *Anathoth* signifies *answer*.

34. This represents the utter destruction of the army of Senacherib, after he had made a near approach to Jerusalem.

Ch. XI. 1. The prophet, after having announced the destruction of the army of Senacherib, as a type of that of all the enemies of Israel, describes the future happy state of his country under a prince of the house of David.

5. This is, no doubt, the proper character of Jesus, and an account of the part that he is destined to act at his

his second coming, when he will judge, that is rule, the world in righteousness.

6. This is a description of the peaceful and happy times which the Israelites are to enjoy after their last return to their own country ; so that the judicial office of Christ is to precede that time.

10. All nations are, in some sense or other to be subject to the Messiah, and to the Israelites, over whom he will reign.

11. Pathros is Thebais in Egypt.

12. This is clearly descriptive of the final return of the Israelites from all parts of the world.

13. The rivalry between the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel will cease, and they will again form one nation, as is clearly expressed in other prophecies,

14. Other prophecies announce the possession of the country of the Philistines, and also that of the Moabites and Ammonites, by the Israelites after their return.

16. This seems to be a figurative description of the removal of every impediment to the return of the dispersed Jews ; not that any river will be actually so divided, or that any high way will be made purposely for them ; but that every thing that is necessary will be done to favour their passage.

Ch. XII. 1—6. This is a song of praise to be sung by the Jews after their restoration ; and it is well adapted to the joyful occasion.

Ch. XIII. The instructions of the prophets of Israel were not confined to their own nation. All the more considerable of them foretold the fates of the neighbouring nations

nations with whom they had any intercourse ; and no doubt their predictions were made known to those nations. In some cases the prophets themselves were expressly sent to them, as Jonah to Nineveh. By this means it pleased the Divine Being to make known his character of Lord of the whole earth, and not of one people only. That in doing this the prophets did not pay their court to the people of other nations, is evident from the heavy judgments they denounced against the most powerful of them, as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Tyre, when their power was the greatest. In this part of the book of Isaiah we find his predictions concerning the fate of all the neighbouring nations, generally contrasted with that of his own country. According to them the Jews would suffer greatly, but a remnant of the nation would be saved, and from this root, or branch, would more than recover its pristine greatness, while all the other nations, notwithstanding the then prosperous state of their affairs, would become extinct.

1. The introduction to this prophecy is peculiarly striking. It represents a great commotion among the nations, in consequence of their being mustered by God to fight his battles.

6. As these judgments [are called *the day of Jehovah*, or the day, or time, in which he would avenge his people of their enemies, they have respect, I doubt not, to a time yet future.

11. This *visitation of the whole world* must include the judgments of God both on the Israelites and on their enemies.

16 It

16. It is not possible by any language to describe a greater convulsion in the state of the world, and a greater destruction of mankind. Allowing all that we can to hyperbolical description, it must refer to something much greater than has yet taken place.

17. After the general account of all the judgments with which God will visit a guilty world, the prophet comes to the case of Babylon in particular, and to events near to his own time, tho' it is very possible that in his own idea they might all be coincident, or immediately follow one another. The prophets did not always understand their own predictions, but *they spake as Peter says, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*, so that other persons living nearer to the time of the events may understand them better than they did.

In the time of Isaiah Babylon was only a city belonging to the Assyrian empire, or at the most had but just asserted its independence of it. For the Babylonians joining with the Medes overturned the Assyrian empire; and yet the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes, then in alliance with them, is here distinctly foretold; and the destruction of a city which after the time of the prophet came to be the greatest that the world had ever seen, has been completely and wonderfully accomplished, and at such a distance from the time of the prophet, that it can never be in the power of unbelievers to say that the prediction did not precede the event, or that it in the least contributed to produce it.

21. By *satyrs* are to be understood goats, which frequent rocky and desert places.

22 The

22. The expression of a time being *near*, is often used in the scriptures to denote the *certainly* of an event ; as if the Divine Being, who looks into futurity, saw it actually come to pass. This, I doubt not, was the meaning of Jesus, when he said to the penitent thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Ch. XIV. 1. The prophet after describing the calamitous end of Babylon, contrasts it with the future happy state of his own country.

2. This must relate to their final return and peaceful settlement in their own country ; for it cannot be said as yet that they have *ruled over their oppressors.*

4. This is a striking poetical description of the fall of Babylon, and the powerful king of it ; when the dead are personified, and represented as meeting and accosting him on his arrival among them.

20. The LXX has *Micland and my people.*

25. The bittern is a bird that avoids places frequented by men.

24. The labour of Egypt was corn ; that of the Sabians was *gold, silver, ivory, and perfumes*, in which they trafficked.

26. The conclusion shews that as particular judgments were reserved for Babylon, its fate would extend to all other nations that had oppressed, or should oppress, the Jews.

28. The Philistines, after having been conquered by David, had recovered themselves, and become formidable to the Israelites ; but they had been again subdued by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi, 6) and had probably continued in a state of subjection till the death of Ahaz, on which

which event they might rejoice, and revolt. In this state of things the prophet announces their intire and final subjugation.

29. Tho' Ahaz was dead, his son and successor would be more formidable than he had been.

30. The Israelites would suffer, but it would be only like taking the fruit from a tree, which in due season would produce more ; but the sufferings of the Philistines would be like destroying the root of the tree, which could never recover itself. Accordingly we read that they were conquered by Hezekiah, 2 Kings, xviii, 8, that *he smote the Philistines even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.* But this prophecy was not completely fulfilled till after the conquests of Alexander, and the subjection of what remained of the Philistines to the kings of Judea.

Ch. XV. This chapter and the following contain an account of the judgments of God against Moab, to be accomplished in three years ; but the prophecy being without a date, history furnishes no light for the interpretation of it. It is only conjectured that it was delivered in the first year of Hezekiah, and fulfilled by Shalmanassar, when he invaded the kingdom of Israel. But, as far as appears, all that the Moabites suffered by the Assyrians, was little in comparison to what they suffered by Nebuchadnezzar afterwards. For in the time of Jeremiah they were a powerful nation, and he denounced heavy judgments against them, very much in the manner of this prophecy of Isaiah. I would observe on this occasion, that the difficulties we meet with
in

in reconciling history with prophecy is a proof that the books of scripture are no forgeries. The persons who forged them might easily have guarded against any objection of this kind.

1. Instead of *destroyed in the night*, a small variation in the Hebrew will make it *completely destroyed*. Mention is here made of particular cities of the Moabites, and of their lamentation at the altars of their gods, who could give them no assistance.

2. To cut off the hair was a token of mourning in all antient nations. The object was to neglect and disfigure themselves, as if careless what became of them.

7. Moab bordered upon the Arabs, who were always noted for plundering their neighbours, agreeable to the original prophecy concerning Ishmael. *His hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him*. Thus Job is represented as suffering by their incursions.

9. *Dimon* is from a root which signifies *food*; and to this there is an allusion after the manner of the Hebrew poets. There is great uncertainty in the reading and interpretation of this passage.

Ch. XVI. The meaning of this part of the prophecy is very obscure. It probably intimates that not only the chief men, but the son of the king, would flee before the enemy; and that even the women would be obliged to cross the river Arnon, which was the boundary of the country.

4. This seems to imply that they who fled from Moab would take refuge in the kingdom of Judah, and be kindly received there.

6 The

6. The pride of Moab is noticed by Jeremiah, tho' it does not appear from history that there was any particular foundation for it.

8. These wines were probably much esteemed, and sent to distant countries.

12. The heathens imagined that when they could not succeed in their application to their gods in one place, they might in another ; as we see in the history of Balaam.

Ch. XVII. 1. This prophecy concerning Damascus (but which relates as much to the ten tribes) was probably delivered before the invasion by the Assyrians, and while they were both confederated against the kingdom of Judah. It is thought to have been fulfilled when Tiglathpilesar took Damascus, and carried the people to Kir, 2 Kings xvi. 9, and when at the same time the Assyrians overran part of the kingdom of Israel, and carried away many captives. But it was more completely fulfilled on the conquest of that country, and the captivity of the remains of the people, by Shalmanassar.

2. There is great uncertainty in the rendering of this passage. Our common version has *the cities of Aroer are forsaken*. In the Syriac it is *Adoiris is forsaken*. In the Seventy, *Damascus is taken from the cities, and shall be destroyed*. As this has not taken place, I prefer the common rendering, tho' it is no doubt very uncertain. Damascus has never since this time been the seat of an independent empire ; but the language of the other part of the prophecy must be hyperbolical, if the present reading be right.

5. Rephaim was a fruitful valley near Jerusalem.

8 This

8. This seems to respect a very distant period, when idolatry will be for ever abolished, tho' it was, no doubt, true of the Samaritans, who were, and still are, as much devoted to the sole worship of the true God as the Jews.

12. These three verses have no apparent connection with any thing that precedes or follows them, so that it is doubted whether they be in their proper place.

The prophecy is similar to many others, which describe an invasion of Palestine at the final return of the Jews, when their enemies will be defeated with great slaughter.

Ch. XVIII. This chapter is a continuation of the prophecy concerning Damascus which was begun in the preceding. It was then the metropolis of a powerful state, and in conjunction with the kingdom of Israel, threatened that of Judah. But though of these two Damascus is threatened with utter destruction, and the *fortress* is foretold to cease from Ephraim, yet it is said that, *a remnant shall be left of Israel*.

As no new title occurs till the nineteenth chapter, we may conclude that the predictions in the eighteenth cannot relate to Egypt, as Bishop Lowth, with I believe all other interpreters supposes, especially as the very next chapter has the title of *The burden of Egypt*.

1. As the word *והי* in Ch. xviii, 12, evidently supposes *woe*, and announces calamity, the same must, no doubt, be its meaning in this verse, which is only a continuation of the same prophecy, tho' it may in other places be a mere interjection, signifying a call to some person or nation.

Not-

Notwithstanding the uncertainty there may be in the meaning of particular words and phrases in this prophecy, as well as in many others, it may not be difficult to ascertain the general sense of them from collateral evidence, so that, tho' these words and phrases may remain of doubtful interpretation, there may be no great uncertainty with respect to any thing of much importance in the prophecy. Such I take to be the case with respect to this.

There is great uncertainty in rendering the phrase **צלצל כנפיו**, but that it is in any respect descriptive of *Egypt*, cannot be admitted for the reason just given; and as the verses immediately preceding in the same prophecy, tho' improperly placed in a different chapter, represent all nations exposed to divine judgments, they may be intended to denote the most powerful of them in general, without alluding to any of them in particular. The phrase *shadowing with wings*, which is the most literal rendering, and adopted in our common translation, may refer to its power of protecting other nations, and therefore imply great power in itself, such as might lead it to expect to escape the threatened judgments.

Cush, being a country situated farther to the South than any other with which the Israelites were acquainted, *the land beyond the rivers of Cush*, may signify any distant nation; the prophecy intimating that neither great power, nor remoteness of situation, would avail any nation on which God had determined to inflict his judgments.

2. As the final return of the Israelites from all the countries of their dispersion (in which return they will be favoured and assisted by other nations) is represented by the prophet, Ch. Lxvi, 20, under the images of an *offering* brought from all nations to Jehovah, v. 7 of this prophecy, in which the same language is made use of, most probably relates to the same great event. Consequently the prophet's description of this nation must be understood of the Israelites, whatever difficulty there may be with respect to the particular phrases by which that nation is designated.

The phrase קר קר in the description of the same people is probably a corruption of the original text; since the words give no clear meaning whatever. We may, therefore, adopt some of the ancient versions; and tho' these differ, they all agree in giving the idea of a people oppressed and harrassed, as the Israelites are in their present dispersion. Since, however, the same words occur in Ch. xxviii, 10, where they are rendered by our translators *line upon line*, and made equivalent to *precept upon precept*, one of the marginal renderings, viz. *a nation of line line*, may, as the most literal, be approved. In either case it denotes the Israelites, who have been favoured with divine revelations, tho' they were not effectual to prevent their apostacy.

The phrase *whose land the rivers have spoiled*, may well enough apply to the holy land, if by *rivers* we understand any other cause of desolation, such as hostile armies, which are often compared to the overflowing of rivers.

The

The phrase *swift messengers* by no means necessarily alludes to the inhabitants of the land shadowing with wings, or any other particular nation, but to swift messengers in general, who are directed to announce the purposes of God with respect to his people, and likewise to all other nations, his purposes of favour to the former, and of heavy judgments on the latter. And since mention is made, v. 6, of being *left to the fowls of the mountains and the beasts of the earth*, and this is the very language in which the destruction of the enemies of the Israelites at their final restoration, is made use of in other prophecies, it is probable that the same great event is alluded to in this more obscure passage.

4. 5. There is much difficulty in the translation of these two verses, and I am by no means satisfied with any that I have seen of them; but the object of them seems to be to express the attention that God gives to his chosen people at all times, either with respect to the favour which he will finally shew to them, or to his chastisement of them for their disobedience.

The general sense of this prophecy, without regard to the meaning of particular phrases, I take to be as follows. After pronouncing a woe on the nations in general, meaning, no doubt, those who should have oppressed the Israelites, the prophet proceeds to say in the name of God, "Woe to the most powerful, and the most distant, of those nations, to which there is no access but by sea, and let swift messengers go to my own people, who have been oppressed by other nations, to announce my favour to them. Let all the inhabitants of the world attend to my signals on the approach of the time,

“time, when I shall shew this favour to them. For I
 “shall certainly deliver them from all their afflictions;
 “and severely punish all their enemies; while they shall
 “be brought as an offering to me from all other nations,
 “and enjoy a permanent and undisturbed settlement in
 “their own country.”

Ch. XIX. 1. This describes the consternation of the Egyptians on the judgments that were to befall them.

2. This was fulfilled when, after the death of Sethon, the country was divided into twelve parts, after which Psammeticus, the king of one of them, conquered the whole.

4. This may refer to the conquest of the country by Nebuchadnezzar.

5. *The waters failing from the sea, which is the common version, and I think preferable to any other, may signify the diminution of the strength of the country.*

17. The preceding account of the calamity of Egypt may refer to the conquest of the country by Nebuchadnezzar; but this seems to point to a future time when the Israelites will be restored to their country, and be a terror to other nations.

19. Some have thought that this was fulfilled by the erection of a temple like to that in Jerusalem, in Egypt, in the time of the Ptolemies. But it is more probable that it refers to the time when the Egyptians, as well as the people of all other countries, shall be, worshippers of the same God, as is expressed in the twenty first and following verses.

23. Both

23. Both Egypt to the South, and Assyria to the North, shall join the Jews in the worship of the same God.

Ch. XX. 1. The great power of the Assyrians united several nations in a confederacy against them, and among others the Jews under Hezekiah, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians. As Tartan is mentioned 2 Kings xvii, 17, as one of the generals of Senacherib; this last might be the same with Sargon. Ashdod might at this time belong to Judah, since we find 2 Kings, xviii, 8, that *Hezekiah smote the Philistines even unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.*

2 In order to give the people a more lively idea of predicted events, and draw their attention more forcibly to them, the prophets were frequently directed to exhibit themselves in peculiar characters, &c. So here as an emblem of the fate of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, Isaiah was directed to put on the appearance of a captive, stripped of every thing, probably for three days; to shew that this would take place within the space of three years.

6. The Jews seeing the fate of their confederates would naturally be alarmed for themselves.

Ch. XXI. 1. The *desert of the sea* means the country about Babylon, which was originally not habitable on account of the overflowing of the river, and the inroads made by the sea. When the city was built the water was confined to a certain channel.

2. Before Babylon had risen to any great degree of

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power

power, its destruction is here foretold ; and when the nations by whom it is declared to fall were hardly known.

5. In order to preserve their shields, which were of metal free from rust, and very bright, they put oil upon them.

6. There is something peculiarly striking in the manner in which the destruction of Babylon is here announced, as an event that had actually taken place, a watchman on his station hearing the news of it.

10. This was an intimation that the Jews, who would be oppressed by the Babylonians, would be rescued out of their power.

11. *Dumah* must be the same with *Idumea*, *Scir* being the capital of that kingdom. This prophecy represents the Edomites in a state of great alarm, but the construction is exceedingly uncertain. In the case of Babylon the watchmen had certain news to tell ; but this watchman of Idumea, only puts off those who inquired of him to a future time. The Chaldee paraphrase reads as follows. *O prophet tell them what is to come, and he answers there is a reward for the righteous, and punishment for the wicked, if you will be converted, be converted while you may.* But it does not appear how the Hebrew can be made to bear this construction.

13. History throws no light on this prophecy. As it was delivered a year before the fulfilment, it may have been a year before the invasion of Senacherib ; who in going to, or returning from, Egypt, might overrun some part of Arabia.

14 This

14. This is a notice to those Arabs who would not be involved in this calamity, to assist their brethren in their flight.

Ch. XXII. The prophecy which begins with this chapter, and ends v. 14, announces the invasion of Judah by the Assyrians, and the many calamities that would attend it. It is intitled *the oracle concerning the valley of vision*, from an expression in v. 5, which is supposed to allude to Jerusalem, as the place in which the Divine Being chiefly declared his will; tho' why it should be called a *valley*, rather than a *hill*, especially as the temple was built on one of its hills, does not appear.

1. This represents great alarm, people running to the tops of their houses to learn what was the occasion of it; this being the custom in the East, as from no other part of the house can they see what is passing in the street.

3. Many would, no doubt, flee from the enemy, but this could hardly be from Jerusalem, but from some other city, which had been taken from the enemy. Jerusalem was not taken.

5. This must allude to the preparation for the siege, by breaking the wall in order to let in water from the upper pool, which was done with much labour by Hezekiah.

7. This was a city of Media, then subject to the Assyrians, as was Persia or Elam, and also Syria, whose forces made part of the Assyrian armies.

8. A place within the city built by Solomon, and

called *the house of the forest of Lebanon*, on account of its being built with cedar from Lebanon.

11. They made preparation for their defence without looking to God.

14. This is the language of profaneness, and such is more than once alluded to by other prophets. Many of these profane and luxurious persons probably perished in this invasion.

15. This was probably one of the rich and profane persons alluded to in the preceding verse. Like many ostentatious persons in the East, he had built himself a magnificent sepulchre, in a solid rock; but he is here informed that he would die out of the country, and consequently have no occasion for it.

20. Eliakim the son of Hilkiah is mentioned as treasurer at the time of the invasion by Senacherib, and it was probably the same that succeeded this Shebna.

22. Keys in antient times were generally made of wood and very large. Being also generally crooked, they were most conveniently carried on the shoulder.

23. The *nails* in the oriental buildings were large pins, or bolts, inserted in the wall when it was built, and generally so as to strengthen the building. The ends of them, projecting into the room, served both for ornament and use.

25. The person represented by this nail which was to be cut off, must be Shebna above mentioned.

Ch. XXIII. 1. In the time of Isaiah Tyre was a great commercial city, and there could not have been any appearance of danger to it from any power what-

ever

ever. Notwithstanding, being addicted, as were all the neighbouring countries, to idolatry, its destruction is here preremptorily announced ; and tho' the time is not mentioned, the prediction being delivered in connection with that of the fall of the other states, we may conclude that the same period was meant for them all.

Tarshish was probably Tartessus in Spain, one of the most distant places to which the Tyrians sent any ships. There was, however, another place of the same name to which they sailed from the Red sea. The land of Chittim means any country bounded by the Mediterranean. In several of these the Tyrians had settlements, and from some of them the news of the destruction of Tyre is supposed to be carried to Tarshish.

2. Silence was a mark of astonishment and terror:

3. Egypt supplied the neighbouring countries with corn, and this trade was one of the sources of the riches of Tyre.

4. The Sidonians were the founders of Tyre, and would of course be much concerned at its fall. Tyre is called a *fortress of the sea*, being built on the sea coast, and strongly fortified.

7. Mention is made of Tyre in the time of Joshua. The Tyrians had colonies in very distant countries, but more especially after their conquest by Nebuchadnezzar.

10. There is great uncertainty in the rendering of this verse.

11. The judgments of God were ready to be poured

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out

out on all the land of Canaan, and on the countries bordering upon it, and Tyre would not escape.

12. By a deflowered virgin is probably to be understood the devotedness of the Tyrians to the worship of idols. It was from thence that Ahab introduced the worship of Baal into his kingdom. In Carthage, which was a colony from Tyre, the horrid custom of human sacrifices was kept up; and tho' the Carthaginians flourished a long time, they were at length conquered by the Romans.

13. The Chaldeans in the time of Job seem to have lived by plunder, like the Arabs. It is thought that the Assyrians reduced them to a settled state when they built Babylon. Yet these Chaldeans formerly so inconsiderable, are here declared to be the people that should destroy Tyre.

15. The Babylonian empire lasted seventy years; and this is perhaps the term intended in this place, tho' the conquest of Tyre was about the middle of it. It did not, however, recover its former wealth and power till long after the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus. It is thought that the Tyrians recovered their liberty when they assisted Darius Hystaspes against the Ionians; and from this time which was about seventy years after their conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, they began to flourish again.

18. No intimation is here given of the second conquest of Tyre by Alexander, and the final state of desolation to which it would be reduced, as foretold by Ezekiel. What is meant by her *gain becoming holy to Jehovah* is uncertain. In a much later period the Tyrians

rians became christians, and their city was an archbishoprick under the patriarchate of Jerusalem. But I cannot think that this was intended in the prophecy, and rather think that a time yet future was meant, when it will be rebuilt, and occupied by the Israelites; or a people who, like all other nations at that time, will send to worship at Jerusalem. Some little probability is given to this conjecture by the prophet passing immediately after this to the remotest times. And the prophecies of Isaiah in general respect the last state of the world, without any notice of intermediate events. These are unfolded by subsequent prophets.

Ch. XXIV. From this place it appears to me that the prophecies in this book have but a few great, and those very distant objects, if we except the histories of the invasion of Senacherib, and of the sickness of Hezekiah, which are introduced without any connection with what goes before or that follows them. Without much regard to methodical arrangement, the prophet denounces judgments against his countrymen for their apostasy, but much greater against the nations who would be the means of punishing them. He very particularly describes the calamitous state of the world previous to the restoration of the Jews; and on this and the subsequent peaceful and happy state of the whole world, he dwells with peculiar satisfaction.

On this subject he enlarges in a style highly figurative, introducing the most pleasing images that a bold imagination could supply. It seems probable that the general ideas were all that were furnished by inspiration, and that the particular descriptions, the language, and

and the method, are the prophet's own. From this place with the exception of the historical circumstances above mentioned, there are few traces of distinct prophecies. It is one continued discourse, without interruption, sometimes on one subject, and sometimes on another, and reverting to the same again and again. Indeed, excepting a few occasional historical circumstances, and some predictions concerning the fate of the neighbouring nations, all the prophets from Amos to Malachi, the first and the last of them, have the same great object. And with respect to this world there could not be any greater, or more interesting. Having the same general object, these prophecies mutually explain one another.

1. The first part of this chapter to the 13th verse is a representation of the great calamities with which the world in general, and the Israelites in particular, will be afflicted on account of their idolatry and vices.

13. Notwithstanding this general depravity, and the judgments which would be the consequence of it, some would be preserved from the general contagion, and maintain their allegiance to the true God.

15. Here persons of all nations, as well as the Israelites, who will be dispersed among all nations, are exhorted to preserve the pure worship of God.

16. This lamentation is that of the few who will remain.

17. These images are taken from the different methods of driving away, or catching, wild beasts. The first was some object which by its appearance, or the noise that it made, would frighten them; the pit, or pitfall was a hole dug in the ground, and slightly covered, into

into which they would fall when they went over it ; and the snare was a net in which they were entangled.

19. This seems to be a representation of the great revolutions in government, and the wars and calamity that will be occasioned by them, which will take place in what are emphatically called *the latter days*, in which kings and nobles will be great sufferers. They are signified by the disorder of the sun and moon in the heaven, v. 23. And that here is a reference to the last age of the world, when the Jews will be restored to their own country, is evident from the mention that is made of God reigning in mount Zion.

Ch. XXV. 1. The prophet, in the prospect of the glorious times indicated in the last verses of the preceding chapter, naturally breaks out into this hymn of praise to God.

6. The happiness of the future times is often compared to a feast, which God prepares for the righteous. The Jews frequently made use of this language, as Luke xiv, 15, Blessed is he that eats bread in the kingdom of God ; *eating bread* being equivalent to partaking of an entertainment. In the East wine is kept in earthen jars, and of course with the lees, from which it is freed by straining through cloth.

7. This may signify the removal of all tokens of sorrow.

According to the Syriac version, and 1 Cor. xv, 54, the proper rendering should be *death is overcome with triumph*.

8. This may intimate that the Hebrew nation will be recovered from a state similar to death ; or, as many of the

the Jews suppose, that the resurrection will take place at that time. Whatever be meant by this phrase, it is something that will take place at the time of the return of the Israelites to their own country.

10. The fate of Moab may represent that of all the enemies of the Hebrew nation. In the East straw is used instead of hay, and for this purpose they cut it small by means of an instrument which they draw over it.

11. The enemies of the Israelites will struggle in vain to save themselves, as men in drowning endeavour to save themselves by swimming.

Ch. XXVI. This chapter contains a hymn of praise on the restoration of the Hebrew nation.

18. We have suffered much to no purpose, like women with a false conception.

19. When other nations would entirely perish, the Israelites would recover as from the grave; or it may signify an actual resurrection, as was observed before, to take place at that time.

20. While other nations shall be in a state of great convulsion, the Israelites are exhorted to wait with patience for the issue, which will be glorious for them. In the same manner they were ordered to keep within doors while the destroying angel was putting to death the first born of the Egyptians.

Ch. XXVII. 1. By leviathan, which is the crocodile, a strong and dangerous animal, is represented the enemies of the Israelites.

2. Under the emblem of a vineyard is signified the care that God will take of his people. It is a dialogue
in

in which there are two speakers, first the Divine Being, and then his people.

4. In this verse the speaker is the vineyard personified.

7. The enemies of the Israelites will be treated as they had treated them.

9. It is only on the renunciation of idolatry that the Israelites will be restored to the divine favour.

10. This represents the destruction of the enemies of the Israelites.

12. This describes the care of the Divine Being to collect his people from the most distant parts of the world.

Ch. XXVIII. The four first verses of this chapter have no connection with what goes before or follows them, and those parts connect very well without these verses. They contain a threatening of the destruction of the ten tribes, and therefore must have been delivered before the invasion by Shalmanassar.

3. It was customary with the Hebrews, as well as the Greeks and Romans, to wear crowns of flowers at entertainments. These would be torn from their heads, and an end put to their festivity, by the judgments which would overtake them.

4. Samaria, the capital of the ten tribes, was situated on a hill, surrounded by a rich valley, with other hills in prospect; so that it resembled a crowned head. This city would be taken and plundered with as much ease as a person seizes delicious fruit in summer.

5. The phrase *that day* must mean a very distant period, and not that in which Samaria would be destroyed.

ed. It should therefore be connected with the 12th verse of the preceding chapter, which begins in the same manner viz. *on that day*; and both of them certainly relate to the same time, viz. the return of the Israelites from their final dispersion. From this place the same discourse or prophecy is continued without interruption to the 36th chapter. It contains reproofs for the apostasy and iniquity of the people, a denunciation of judgments on that account, the punishment of their oppressors, and a prospect of happy times in the latter days.

6. God will give wisdom to those whose office of judges requires it, and strength to them who shall be engaged with the enemy.

7. Even his own people, for whom this favour was reserved, had sinned and been guilty of great excesses. They had treated the warnings of the prophets with contempt.

9. This is an account of the contemptuous language of some profane person, who said that God treated them like young children, giving them the same lessons again and again, as if they were incapable of understanding them.

11. Here the Divine Being retorts their own language. He would give them lessons, but by a nation whose language they would not understand.

12. When the Divine Being shewed them where their safety lay, they would not give ear to it.

13. He would, therefore, do as they had reproached him with doing; he would give them lesson upon lesson, and one calamity after another, intimated by the measuring

measuring line (which was used for taking down, as well as building up) till their destruction should be completed.

15. They thought themselves in perfect security, as if they had made a treaty with death and the grave, by which they were bound not to hurt them. Similar to this is the language of the book of Job Ch. v, 23; *Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.*

16. Tho' great future happiness was reserved for the Israelites, as if a stone was already laid for its foundation, such as should never be removed, it would be a stone at which they would at first stumble and fall.

17. He would administer his judgments by rule, according to justice, and their boasted security would avail them nothing.

28. As the husbandman adapts his various operations according to the nature of the soil, and the grain which he sows, so the Divine Being would vary his treatment of them according to their characters and occasions, till the discipline to which they were subjected should have fully effected his purpose. Here is an allusion to four different methods of threshing used in the East, the flail, the drag, the wain, and the treading of cattle. The flail was made for grain that would not bear much violence. The drag was a heavy and rough instrument drawn over the straw with oxen. The wain was a similar instrument furnished with wheels. The treading of oxen is alluded to by Moses when he says

says Deut. xxv. 4. *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.* Cummin has seeds of a bitterish warm taste, with an aromatic flavour. The *rye* should be *rice*.

Ch. XXIX. 1. It is evident that by *Ariel* is meant Jerusalem; but why it should be so called does not appear. The most probable signification of the word is *the lion of God*, or the *strong lion*, alluding perhaps to the natural strength of the place. In Ez. xliii, 15, the altar of burnt offering is called *ariel*.

2. Tho' they would continue some time without any unfavourable appearance, their calamity would certainly come in due time.

4. It was imagined that the dead, speaking under the ground, could not easily make themselves heard by those who consulted them; and the necromancers of antiquity, speaking as from them, muttered in a low voice, as from a person covered with earth.

5. With a little alteration of the text it will be *thine enemies*.

6. Rather *it* (i. e. the multitude of nations before mentioned) *shall be visited*.

8. This may represent either the destruction of Sennacherib's army in particular, or the enemies of the Jews in general in the latter days, when they will be disappointed of their expected prey. As mention is made of a multitude of nations, I think the reference is to the more distant of the two events. The Assyrians were but one nation, tho' others served under them.

9. The

9. The inflicting of calamity is often compared to making a person drink of a cup. In this place the contents of it are supposed to be of an intoxicating and stupifying nature.

12. The warnings of the prophets had no effect on persons so infatuated as they were.

13. This was exactly the case of the Jews in the time of our Saviour, and was, no doubt, the same in the time of Isaiah.

15. This represents profane persons. Notwithstanding their contempt of God, from supposing that he did not interfere in their affairs, he would treat them as he thought proper, even as the potter his clay.

17. This denotes a great revolution in the state of the world. Carmel being remarkably fruitful, and Lebanon barren. It seems to refer to the great revolutions that are to take place in the world at the return of the Jews from their dispersion, when every objection to the dispensations of providence will be removed, and the most obstinate will be convinced.

24. The wicked and profane will be punished, and the virtuous and pious preserved.

Ch. XXX. 2. In order to oppose the invasion of the Assyrians, the Israelites had recourse to Egypt; but this they are apprized would not avail them.

5. These were cities in Egypt, whither the ambassadors from Judah went.

6. This is a description of the wilderness through which they must go in their way to Egypt.

7. One that can give no assistance.

8 This

8. This prophecy, professedly relating to distant times, must, I think, look far beyond that of Senacherib. It is a solemn warning of the judgments of God for their sins, and announces their general dispersion.

13. The walls of many houses, being made of earth, were liable to crack and fall.

15. Notwithstanding the heavy judgments here announced, in which few would be spared, mercy was reserved for them on their repentance.

22. This total rejection of idolatry did not take place after the invasion of Senacherib, but is always mentioned as a character of the last times.

26. This binding up the breach of his people, and healing their wounds, refers, no doubt, to the last times.

28. This sitting of the nations cannot relate to the Assyrians only, the' in v. 30 mention is made of them only, being the enemies of Judah at that time.

33. Tophet or the valley of the son of Hinnom, was a place near to Jerusalem where, in the time of idolatry, children were sacrificed to Molock; but the name is used to denote a place of punishment in general, such as was destined for the enemies of Israel in future times. The Assyrian army was not destroyed in this place, but at a greater distance from Jerusalem, and in a different direction.

Ch. XXXI. When Judah was invaded by the Assyrians, it was natural for the people to look for assistance from Egypt, the only great rival power then existing. But this they did without consulting God in the manner

ner which the law prescribed. For tho' they had kings, God himself was still their chief governor ; and besides the prophets, there was a standing method of consulting the oracle on all great occasions, and David and others did not neglect it. To punish them for this neglect, they are threatened with a total disappointment in their expectations from Egypt ; but they are assured that God himself would protect them from the danger, and this was accomplished in the defeat of the Assyrians in a miraculous manner, without the help of man.

7. As mention is here made of the total abolition of idolatry, which did not take place after the invasion of Senacherib, I am inclined to think that this prophecy looks to a more distant time, when many nations will invade the Holy Land, and be cut off in a manner similar to the destruction of the army of the Assyrians at this time. See Zach. xiv, &c.

Ch. XXXII. 1. If this prophecy was delivered in the reign of Ahaz, the king that is here mentioned may be Hezekiah who succeeded him ; but I rather think that it refers to the Messiah, or more generally to the succession of princes of the house of David, who would reign after the restoration of the Jews.

4. This alludes to the increase of knowledge, and especially of religious knowledge, in the latter times.

5. Princes who rule in righteousness will distinguish the righteous from the wicked, and treat them accordingly.

9. This is an awful prediction of the calamitous times that will come before the happy one before mentioned ; and as this certainly refers to times far remote

from those of Hezekiah, the prosperous times must do so too.

14. Ophel was an elevated part of the hill of Sion, near to that on which the temple was built, and it had a separate fortification.

15. Carmel was remarkable for its fertility. This would become still more populous, so as to resemble a city; and the wilderness, which was not habitable before, would be like Carmel in the time of the prophets.

16. This has never yet taken place, and therefore both the preceding desolation of the country, and this happy state of it, must be subsequent to the time of Hezekiah.

20. This is thought to allude to the custom of sending cattle to tread the fields before the planting of rice in them. For the custom is to throw the seed on the water before which it has been trodden by cattle, which Chardin says often go midleg deep. But Palestine was not a country proper for the growth of rice. It was hilly and bore wheat.

Ch. XXXIII. This prophecy respects the latest period of the Jewish state, and the destruction of the nation which should oppress the Israelites, tho' the first part of it was literally fulfilled at the invasion of Sennacherib.

2. *Be thou our arm.* MSS.

3. This people, or nation, must, I think, refer to more than the Assyrians.

5. This happy moral state of things did not take place in the time of Hezekiah.

7 This

7. This is a description of the alarm occasioned by the approaching invasion.

8. According to the common rendering of this verse, it seems to refer to the agreement that Hezekiah made with Senacherib, and which the latter broke. But there is much uncertainty in the meaning; and it may signify any cruel and faithless enemy, such as will invade the Holy Land in the latter days.

11. *My spirit, like fire, shall consume you.* Chal. MSS. L.

14. This seems to represent the purification of the Israelites by their many calamities, in which the wicked and profane among them would perish, but the truly virtuous be preserved, and settled with glory in their own country:

20. This cannot be applied to the time of Hezekiah, but to the future permanent state of peace and security which the Israelites are to enjoy hereafter.

23. Both the land and the sea forces of the enemy would be distressed.

24. Pardoning iniquity signifies the removal of calamity, as occasioned by sin; and this is the language in which the happiness of future times is generally described.

Ch. XXXIV. i. This chapter contains the most highly figurative descriptions of great revolutions, attended with unspeakable calamity, which will take place in consequence of them. It is not in the power of language to supply stronger figures. They are, therefore, not to be understood literally. Nor is it to be supposed that Edom alone will be the scene of the great

slaughter here mentioned. The Edomites were one of the enemies of the Israelites, and may represent all the rest, which are alike devoted to destruction.

9. This is not to be understood literally any more than the preceding. Great devastation was, no doubt, made in all the countries in the neighbourhood of Judea, and among the rest in those that were occupied by the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, and for a time they may be said to have been in a great measure uninhabited. But in some measure they recovered themselves again, and at present they are occupied by the Arabs, tho' the cities have not been rebuilt. From other prophecies it appears that those countries will be occupied by the Israelites after their return.

But this prophecy must look far beyond the time of the desolation of Edom, when the Edomites and the other enemies of the Israelites, suffered by the Chaldeans, and must refer to those heavy judgments which will fall upon their enemies, and guilty nations in general, in the latter days, the same that are indicated by the *war of Armageddon*, which will be attended with a similar destruction of men in the book of revelation, and which is perhaps taking place at this very time.

15. The word here rendered *owl*, signifies a kind of serpent.

Ch. XXXV. 1. This may be considered as a part of the same prophecy with the preceding, describing the happy state of the Israelites, in contrast with the devastation that will be made of other countries; but it certainly refers to a time yet future.

3 This

5. This passage tho' referred to by our Saviour, as in some sense fulfilled by himself, evidently refers to a time yet future, when probably greater things will be done by himself; what he did at his first coming being only a specimen of what he will perform at that time; when he will not only open the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf, but raise the dead.

6. This is evidently a description of temporal prosperity, and of a change in the state of the habitable world, and no account of blessings of a spiritual nature.

& *A way*, not in some MSS. or in the LXX.

The purity of the inhabitants, as well as the extreme populousness of the country, are certain indications of this prophecy relating to that state of things which is described in the second chapter of this book.

Ch. XXXVI. Hezekiah was very successful in the beginning of his reign, when he conquered the Philistines, and tho' his father Ahaz had been tributary to the kings of Assyria, he had revolted from them. However, when Senacherib marched against him, and had advanced into the heart of the country, Hezekiah found it necessary to make his submission. For thus we read 2 Kings xviii, 13. *In the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Senacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended, return from me. That which thou puttest on me I will bear. And the king of Assyria appointed to Hezekiah king of Judah, three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. And*

Y 3

Hezekiah

Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house. At this time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave them to the king of Assyria. All this, however, did not satisfy this rapacious monarch. For after this we come to the history that is now before us, and which is the same, with very little variation, with that in the book of kings, which we may therefore take for granted was copied from that of Isaiah. There is an abridged account of the same transactions in the second book of Chronicles, Ch. 32.

2. Lachish was in the very heart of the country, rather south of Jerusalem.

3. *Thou sayest.* MSS.

7. Senacherib seems to have imagined, that the proper gods of the Jews were those of Ahaz, who had erected an altar to some foreign deity in the temple, similar to one that he had seen at Damascus. This altar Hezekiah had removed:

8. To express his contempt of the forces of Hezekiah, he tells him that, if they should make an alliance, and he should have only two thousand horses, Hezekiah could not find men to mount them. Much confidence was then placed in horsemen, and also in chariots of war; whereas the armies of the Israelites consisted wholly of infantry.

10. He perhaps thought that the worship which Hezekiah had put down was that of Jehovah. It was at least that from which other kings of Judah, and ma-

ny.

ny of the people, had revolted ; and this king of Assyria seems to have presumed that he was authorized to revenge his cause. The heathens, thinking that every country had its own proper deities, always invoked the aid of those of the countries which they invaded, promising them the same, or superior honours.

17. It was the custom of conquerors in those times to remove the inhabitants from their native country to distant places, with a view, no doubt, to break their attachment to it, and take from them a motive to revolt, and also to strengthen certain parts of their other dominions by an increased population.

20. He had before pretended an authority from Jehovah to invade the country. Now he says that Jehovah either would not, or could not deliver them.

Ch. XXXVII. 8. Libnah was to the North of Lachish. Perhaps the march of the Cushites, or Ethiopians to the assistance of Hezekiah had induced him to retreat from Lachish without taking it.

13. It was the opinion of all the antients, that certain divinities were the protectors of cities and states, and that the events of war depended upon them.

29. Camels, and other beasts of burden are led by hooks thrust through the nose:

30. The year of this invasion was probably the Sabatical year, and the following that of the Jubilee, which was also Sabatical ; and the people were assured that notwithstanding this invasion of the country there would be provision enough to supply the people without sowing the grounds. I do not, however, see how this could be called a *sign*, if by it be meant a token of their

deliverance; because this would be subsequent to it? For it cannot well be supposed that the army of Sennacherib continued two years in the country after this.

35. In the seventh verse it is said *I will send a wind against him*, at least so it may be rendered; and therefore it is probable that this army was destroyed by a suffocating wind, such as is not uncommon in several parts of the East. No plague could have made so much destruction in so short a time.

Ch. XXXVIII. 2. In the East persons pass both the days and the nights on carpets, which are placed round the room; and the most honourable place is the corner, which must be most free from disturbance. On a sofa in the corner of the room it is, therefore, probable that Ezekiah lay during his illness; so that having his face from the company, he looked towards the wall. N. B. the clauses included in crotchets are taken from the book of Kings, to make the narrative more complete.

6. After this place the twenty second verse of this chapter. L.

8. The shadow might be made to move in a miraculous manner, without any correspondent motion of the sun or the earth.

After this verse introduce the twenty first verse of this chapter, L.

14. The word here rendered *crane*, Mr. Harmer has shewn to be the *hoopoe*.

13. *I roared until the morning*, Chal. L.

16. *For this cause shall be declared, O Jehovah; concerning thee*, LXX. L.

Ch.

Ch. XXXIX. 1. The Chaldeans having about this time revolted from the Assyrians, would naturally be in friendship with the Jews who had been oppressed by them. They had a common enemy.

2. After the large presents that Hezekiah had made to Senacherib, and the devastation of the country by his invasion of it, it is not easy to account for his great riches. It must probably have come from the plunder of the Assyrian camp, where he might find all the gold and silver with which he had presented him, besides other wealth.

6. At this time the fulfilment of this prophecy must have appeared very improbable. The Chaldeans having just thrown off the yoke of the Assyrians, their kingdom must have been very inconsiderable.

7. It is thought that this was fulfilled in the case of Daniel and his friends, who were of the royal family; tho' it is not expressly said that they were made eunuchs, but only that they were committed to the care of the master of the eunuchs.

8. This piety of Hezekiah is similar to that of Eli in a like case. When he was told of great calamity befalling his family he said, 1 Sam. iii, 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*

Ch. XL. 1. After the recital of the historical circumstances in the preceding chapters, which had interrupted the general subject of the prophecy, the prophet now resumes it, and proceeds as in one continued discourse to the end of the book; announcing in the most sublime and highly figurative language, the return of the Israelites from their final dispersion, and their peaceable

peaceable settlement in their own country, with occasionally mentioning that from Babylon, but without any distinction between that return and the final one, and consequently without giving any idea of another and greater captivity and dispersion subsequent to that of Babylon. The intermediate events were announced by later prophets.

2. This cannot refer to any period but the very last and glorious one of the Israelitish nation.

3. As the Divine Being himself, by visible tokens of his presence, conducted the Israelites from Egypt, he is here represented as acting the same part in the final return of this people, and a solemn proclamation is made to prepare the way for him and his followers.

5. Many intimations are given of the great effect that the final restoration of the Jews will have on the minds of men, giving the most abundant proof of the interposition of God in the government of the world; having foreseen an event so distant, and having in the course of his providence ensured the accomplishment of it, notwithstanding every appearance to the contrary.

8. Every thing belonging to man is uncertain; but the word and promise of God may be depended upon. He has promised these glorious things for his people, and will certainly accomplish them.

12. Here the prophet introduces the most sublime description of the power of God who had engaged for the performance of these great things, and he is herein compared to the impotent objects of the heathen worship.

20. In this place is inserted a passage from Ch XLI, 6, 7. It suits the place so well, that it is generally thought to have been transposed by some careless copier.

27. Here we see the reason why the prophet had enlarged so much on the power of God. It was to shew that his people had no reason to despair of his performing all that he had promised.

Ch. XLI. 1. I am inclined to think that by *the righteous man*, the Chaldee paraphrase is right in supposing that Abraham was intended. He was called from the East, and the dominion of the world is in some sense or other promised to his posterity.}

6. 7. These verses have no proper place here. Houbigant and Kennicott think they ought to follow Ch. LX, 20.

8. The mention of Israel as *the servant of God*, and the seed of Abraham, gives great countenance to the interpretation of the Chaldee paraphrase, especially as it is here said that he was called from the extremity of the earth, which is synonymous to being called from the East.

16. This is in correspondence with many prophecies, which announce a great destruction that will hereafter be made of all the enemies of the Jews.

21. After this prophecy relating to what will come to pass in a very distant time, a challenge is given to the heathen deities to do the same.

25. This alludes to the call of the Israelites from all parts of the world.

26 The

26. The LXX and other antient versions have,
That we may know the certainty of it.

Ch. XLII. 1. This *servant* cannot be any other than the person designated just before, viz. *my servant Jacob*, and by him, that is by his posterity, all nations are to be instructed in religion, as is particularly declared in many parts of this book, as Ch. ii, 3, *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

4. This has much the appearance of a description of some particular person ; but is equally applicable to a nation personified.

7. This is a description of a power to redress all wrongs, and to confer all kinds of benefits ; a power which in a variety of languages is ascribed to the Israelites after their restoration.

10. This is a hymn of praise for the happy state of things in the latter days.

16. This describes the punishment of the nations that shall oppress the Jews, and the favour reserved for the oppressed.

19. A complaint of the stupidity of the people, in not receiving the instruction that was given them.

25. This describes the punishment of their apostacy.

Ch. XLIII. 1. From this verse to the 8th is a description of the great deliverance of the Israelites from their long dispersion.

2. It is common in the East to fire the dry grass, and there is considerable risk in passing through the flame. This is often done to distress an enemy:

3 Other

3. Other nations would finally suffer, while they would be preserved ; as if the Divine Being had purchased their safety by the sacrifice of others.

8. I will lead them back to their country, tho' of themselves they should be so blind as not to be able to see their way, or so deaf as not to be able to listen to a guide.

9. This is a declaration of the power of God to effect the great things that are here announced.

14. Isaiah had informed Itezekjah that his treasures would be carried to Babylon, and his posterity made eunuchs in the palace there. This implied the conquest of his country by the Chaldeans. Here the overthrow of the Chaldeans, and the return of the Jews, is promised. But the account here given of it suits much better the final restoration of that people.

18. In comparison with what God would do for his people in the latter days, all that he had done for them before would be wholly insignificant, and not worth remembering. There is a passage in Jeremiah of the same import with Ch. xvi, 14. *Behold the day is come, saith the Lord, that, it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt : but the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North, and from all the land whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again unto their land that I gave unto their fathers.*

20. So much water will be provided for the Israelites, to facilitate their passage through the wilderness, that the wild beasts will derive advantage from it.

15. No.

25. Notwithstanding the perverseness of the people, God will for his own sake, fulfil his promise to their ancestors in their favour.

Ch. XLIV. 2. *Israel whom I have chosen*; MSS, LXX, &c.

This is an exhortation to trust in the promises of God notwithstanding the most discouraging circumstances in their situation.

5. Here seems to be an allusion to a custom of the heathens, who sometimes inscribed upon their hands the name of the deity to whose worship they were particularly devoted. What follows is a kind of challenge to the heathen gods to do what the true God had done, especially in foretelling distant events; and the prophet adds many observations to shew the folly of idol worship.

13. The word here rendered *line*, Bishop Lowth translates *red ochre*.

14. The cypress hardly ever rots, or is worm eaten. The chests which contained the Egyptian mummies were of this wood, and the gates of St. Peter's church at Rome, which lasted eleven hundred years without any decay, were of the same.

18. It is the custom with the Jews at Aleppo to close the eyes of the bride with gum, and this the bridegroom takes off. But prisoners of the royal family have theirs often fastened more effectually, and are not allowed to have them open for some years. It is, indeed, too often that they are put out entirely.

27. This seems to be an allusion to the manner in which Cyrus should take Babylon; which was by diverting.

verting the course of the river which ran through it, and entering it by the channel. The same is alluded to in Jeremiah L. 38, LI, 36.

28. This is the only case in which a person not born is mentioned by name by any prophet. But I see no reason to object to the authenticity of the book on that account. Names, as well as things, must be equally known to a Being who can look into futurity.

Ch. XLV. 7. This seems to be an allusion to the religion of the Persians, according to which good and evil, light and darkness, had different authors.

9. An admonition not to murmur at the divine proceedings, how unaccountable soever they may appear to us.

13. It is said that the passage in Isaiah was shewn to Cyrus; and it is not at all improbable. Daniel, who was in favour both with Darius the Mede, and with him, would, no doubt, do it; and this will account for the decree which Cyrus made in their favour.

14. The most distant nations, and the most powerful shall acknowledge the pre-eminence of the Israelites after their restoration.

17. This evidently refers to a time that is yet future.

25. This also relates to a future time, when, according to many prophecies, all nations shall join in the worship of the one true God.

Ch. XLVI. In this chapter the prophet exposes the folly of idol worship, and declares the ability of the true God to execute all that he had promised in favour of the Israelites.

11. The ensign of Cyrus is said to have been a golden eagle; and to him, whose country was to the East of Babylon, there is probably an allusion in this place.

Ch. XLVII. 1. This is a representation of the desolation to which Chaldea would be reduced, notwithstanding its addictedness to idol worship.

2. The wealthiest and most delicate among them would be reduced to servitude; and be obliged to submit to the meanest offices; such as were commonly performed by slaves.

6. God was justly angry with his people, and employed the Chaldeans to punish them; but they did it without mercy, and merely to gratify their lust for power.

7. *Thy latter end.* MSS.

9. Babylon, after a long siege, was taken in the night, during a great festival, when the inhabitants had no expectation of such an event.

16. Babylon must have been the centre of a great commerce, and yet none of the nations with whom the Chaldeans had dealings could deliver them.

Ch. XLVIII. 10, *But not as silver.* MSS. Lr.

14. An allusion to Cyrus.

16. This was not like an obscure heathen oracle, nor a muttering out of the earth, like the speech of necromancers, but a clear prediction of what would certainly come to pass.

21. A beautiful description of the safety with which God would conduct the Israelites from the places of their dispersion.

22. There are many intimations that the wicked Israelites will perish in their dispersion, and that only the virtuous and pious will be preserved. Ch.

Ch. XLIX. The whole of this chapter is evidently a sublime description of the glorious return of the Jews from the places of their dispersion; to become the Lords and instructors of the whole world. The speaker is Jacob. A prophecy concerning him preceded his birth, tho' his name was not then mentioned. It was said of him, Gen. xxv, 23, that *The elder should serve the younger.*

5. *That Israel unto him may be gathered.* MSS. L.

Here the speaker is not the nation personified; but some one person, their leader and guide; no doubt the Messiah, or the prince of the house of David before mentioned; who is represented as the restorer of Israel, and the instructor of the whole world; tho' this is also spoken of as the honourable business of the whole nation;

7. Here this glorious person is spoken of as having for some time appeared in a despicable light, and yet destined to be the ruler of those who had treated him with contempt: It is; therefore; probable that Jesus, as the Messiah; was intended in this place; and yet in the next verse he is spoken of as the person, who would lead the people to the promised land. In what sense can this be ascribed to the Messiah?

12. Nothing can be more evident than that the return of the Jews from their last dispersion is alluded to in this place. *Sinin* is perhaps *Syene* in the southern extremity of Egypt.

15. This is a most expressive image; to denote the strong affection that God has for his people.

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16 This

16. This is an allusion to the custom of making indelible marks on the hands, and other parts of the body, to denote men's attachment either to their gods or their friends.

17. *They that destroyed thee shall soon become thy builders.* A. V. L.

18. This is agreeable to the tenor of many prophecies, which represent all nations as assisting the Israelites at their return, and loading them with wealth.

22. It is usual in the East to carry young children on the shoulder. *Fragments* Vol. II, p. 193.

23. This is clearly a prophecy of the subjection, in some sense or other, of all nations to the Jews.

26. This too is in agreement with many predictions of the heaviest judgments falling on those nations which should oppress the Jews in their dispersed state.

Ch. L. 1. Tho' he divorced the mother for her crimes, he never sold his children, as fathers had a legal right on certain conditions to do; and then they might be redeemed. He therefore claimed them as his own, and was able to assert his right, whatever obstacles, by land or by water, might be in his way to recover them.

4. As far as appears from the context, the speaker in this place is the prophet himself; and so it was understood by Lowth, tho' he says that in this the prophet was a type of Christ. As the prophet had his instructions from God, he submitted to every indignity with which he was treated; and to the most cruel and opprobrious treatment many of the prophets were often exposed

supposed, tho' we know nothing of that of Isaiah in particular. It is said that in the reign of Manasseh he was put to death, by being sawn between two boards.

11. If they trusted to themselves, without looking to God they would be confounded.

Ch. LI. 1. The prophet shews that the deliverance of the people from all their oppressions would come from God, who originally called Abraham, and made him the father of a nation, and would exert himself as much in favour of his descendants.

9. Rahab is Egypt. The word signifies *strong* or *proud*.

11. As the Israelites returned in triumph out of Egypt, they would return in the same manner from the countries in which they would afterwards be dispersed.

19. *who will comfort thee?* MSS. LXX.

20. This *wild ox* is probably the *buffalo*.

28. Here, by a strong figure of speech, the Israelites are informed that their enemies would finally be greater sufferers from the divine displeasure than they should be.

Ch. LII. 1. This is a sublime description of the triumphant manner in which the Israelites will return from their present dispersion.

2. A chair of state, or a throne, was elevated, and had a footstool by which to ascend to it, and by which the feet of the person sitting in it were supported.

4. The Egyptians and Assyrians are frequently put for all the enemies of the Israelites. To Egypt they

went voluntarily, and to Assyria they were carried by force; but they were cruelly oppressed by both.

7. Their deliverance is supposed to be announced by a messenger, or herald, going before the Divine Being, who appears as their deliverer.

10. That all mankind are to be convinced of the power and providence of God by his interposition in favour of his people at their restoration, is asserted in several prophecies.

12. They will not return privately, or by stealth, but openly, in a triumphant manner.

13. This *servant* cannot be any other than his *servant Jacob*, so often denominated in this manner, and spoken of immediately before, without any notice of a change of person. See Ch. XLIV 1. ii, 21. XLV. 4.

14. The prophet in this place contrasts the appearance of his nation in their mean and despised condition, while they were dispersed among all other nations, with the glory in which they would appear afterwards.

15. A figure signifying to *refresh*, to *revive*, which is the effect of sprinkling water on the face. MARTIN.

19. *Who will comfort thee?* LXX. L. MSS.

Ch. LIII. 1. Who will believe the great change that will be made in the appearance of this nation.

3. *As one that hideth his face from us.* MSS.

He had both a melancholy and a contemptible appearance.

6. Foreign nations are here the speaker, and they say that the afflictions of the Israelites were such as if they had suffered for the crimes of all other nations, which by this means would go unpunished. 8. Here

8. Here the speaker seems to change to the Divine Being; but the only circumstance which indicates this is the word *עַמִּי* *my people*. and immediately after this the speaker is the other nations, as before. I therefore conjecture that the word was originally *עַמִּי*. (the same word in another form) *the nations*; and Bishop Lowth observes that this very word had no doubt undergone the same change in another place, viz. Ch. LI. 14. Admitting this conjecture, the sense is the same with that of the preceding verse, the expression only being varied, after the manner of this prophet, and the poetical language of the scriptures in general.

The sense of the middle clause of this verse is peculiarly uncertain; and it is variously rendered in the antient versions. The Chaldee paraphrase, which I prefer, is *Who can declare the wonders that will be performed in those days*; which is equivalent to what the prophet had said before, *Who hath believed our report, to extraordinary will this history appear*.

9. The rendering of this verse is very uncertain. All the antient versions give it differently. The Seventy has, *I will give wicked men for his burial, and the rich for his death*; meaning probably that God would punish the wicked and the rich for the death to which they would put him. This is more fully expressed in the Arabic, *I will punish the wicked for his burial, and the rich for his death*. The Syriac has, *The wicked contributed to his burial, and the rich to his death*, or were guilty of putting him to death. The Chaldee has, *He will send the wicked into hell, and the rich who put him to a cruel death*. On the whole, the meaning seems to be

be that rich and wicked men (characters which often go together in the scriptures) have cruelly oppressed him, and will be punished for it.

10. There is no less uncertainty in the rendering of this verse. The Syriac, which seems to give the best sense, has *Sin is imputed to him* (i. e. *suffering is inflicted upon him*) *that he might see his seed and prolong his days*, and that the pleasure of God might prosper by his means.

11. The Syriac renders this, *He shall see of his labour, or the fruit of his labour, he will replenish the righteous with knowledge, and justify them.* But the great variety in all the versions shew the great uncertainty of the true sense.

12. In this verse seems to be comprized the general sense of all the preceding, which is, that on account of his great sufferings, and the patience with which he bore them, he would be amply rewarded. And agreeably to this, the prophet proceeds in the next chapter to describe the happy condition of the people after their dispersion.

Ch. LIV. 1. This chapter, which connects with the preceding, as a continuation of the same prophecy, begins with exultation on the view of the great population of Palestine immediately after the return of the Jews ; which appearing all at once, after a state of extreme desolation, excites the greatest surprize.

8. From this it is evident that the sufferings of the Israelites during their present dispersed and calamitous state will bear but a small proportion to the glory and happiness of their future condition ; a proof that the world

world is to continue much more than a thousand years, in what is usually called the *millenium*.

10. Nothing can be more evident than that this promise has not yet been fulfilled ; but that it will be fulfilled in its fullest extent, no believer in revelation can entertain a doubt.

12. These images denote great strength and also purity, in the New City. The *agate* should have been the *ruby*.

15. That many strangers will conform to the Jewish religion, and settle with that nation after their return, is intimated in many prophecies.

16. Having created even the makers of offensive instruments, no use can be made of them contrary to his will.

Ch. LV. 1. This chapter contains an assurance of every blessing from faith in the divine promises ; the favour of God being gratuitous, and also not uncertain and deceitful, like that of the world.

3. This is a repetition of the promise of some prince of the house of David, under whom the Israelites will hereafter enjoy perfect security, and receive the homage of all nations.

4. A watchman to the people. MSS.

Ch. LVI. 8. There are many intimations in the prophecies, that the divine dispensations to the Israelites have respect to the whole world, and that by their means the knowledge, and the worship of the true God is to become universal.

9. Here is evidently a beginning of a new subject, viz. a complaint of the depravity of the age, and par-

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ticularly of the teachers and governors, with a denunciation of the judgments of God on that account.

Ch. LVII. 6. Among other heathen superstitions was the veneration for large and smooth stones, on the idea, no doubt, of some divinity residing in them. Arnobius says that before he was a christian, wherever he saw a smooth stone, daubed with oil (which shewed that it had been considered with particular respect) he prayed to it, as if some extraordinary power resided in it.

8. They placed the images of their tutelary deities in those places.

9. Some king, perhaps of Assyria, or Egypt, whose assistance they courted without consulting the oracle of God. Hosea, who lived at the same time with Isaiah, says Ch. xii. 1, *They make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried into Egypt.*

10. *And hast not said, I will desist (DODSON) Thou hast acquired great wealth, therefore thou hast not made supplication unto me. Id.*

12. *I will declare my righteousness. MS. L.*

19. The *fruit of the lips*, according to Paul, Heb. xiii, 15, is the *sacrifice of praise*. This God bestows by giving cause for thankfulness.

Ch. LVIII. This chapter contains a most animated invective against hypocrisy, and all mere forms of religion, without corresponding sentiments of the heart. In this we see the excellent moral tendency of the Jewish dispensation.

10.—*Thy bread to the hungry. MSS.*

Ch. LIX. This chapter contains a severe reproof for many vices to which the Jews were addicted, a denunciation

denunciation of judgments in consequence of them, and a promise of favour on repentance.

21. Many prophecies besides this speak of the virtue and obedience of the Israelites after their final restoration.

Ch. LX. 1. The future glorious state of the Hebrew nation, and the homage that is to be paid to them by all other nations, are here represented in language peculiarly striking.

4. Chardin says that in the East children are commonly carried astride on the hip, with the arms round the body. Sometimes they are carried on men's shoulders.

5. *Then shalt thou fear.* MSS. LXX.

6. Presents will be brought from all countries.

12. If there be any meaning in language, all nations must in some sense be subject to the Israelites.

21. We see here, as in many other places, an intimation of the prevalence of virtue, as well as of happiness, among the Israelites after their restoration.

Ch. LXI. 1. The prophet declares his commission to publish glad tidings to his nation; not that he himself was to do the great things here promised, as the language literally implies, but to announce that they would be done.

2. A year means a period in general, the time when God would punish other nations, and shew favour to the Israelites.

10. The speaker in this place is the Hebrew nation.

Ch. LXII. The same subject, viz. the happy return of

of the Israelites, and their final settlement in Palestine, is continued in this chapter.

5. *So shall thy restorer wed thee.* L.

Ch. LXIII. This is a figurative representation of the destruction that God would make of the enemies of the Israelites. The Edomites being put for them all.

6. *And I crushed them in my indignation, and I spilt their life's blood on the ground.* MSS. L.

7. From this place to the end of chapter 64, is a recapitulation of the dealings of God with the Hebrew nation from the first.

15. A prayer and expostulation with God concerning the deserted state of his people.

16. *O deliver us for thy name's sake.* MSS.

Ch. LXIV. 5. *Thou meetest with joy those who work righteousness, who in thy ways remember thee. Lo thou art angry for we have sinned because of our deeds, for we have been rebellious.* Conj. L.

Ch. LXV. This chapter begins with a complaint of the disobedience and idolatry of the Israelites. A punishment is then threatened to those who continue in these practices, with a promise of favour and reward to the obedient and pious, and it ends with an account of the peaceful and happy state of the nation in the latter days.

4. It was the custom of the heathens to have altars on the roofs of their houses. The *broth* here alluded to was for the purpose of lustrations, and other superstitious practices. The seething a kid in its mother's milk is thought to have been of this kind.

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With such things they sprinkled their fields and gardens, thinking it contributed to their fertility. Another heathen custom here alluded to, was their proclamations for all persons not duly prepared to stand at a distance and not approach their sacrifices. *Procul, procul este profani.*

The remaining among the groves may allude to some heathenish customs respecting the dead. In the East tombs are often built by persons of condition with much magnificence, and so as to afford shelter from the weather to those who have no habitation.

8. Notwithstanding the general apostasy, a small number would be preserved on account of their virtue and piety.

10. Sharon, and the valley of Aisher, were famous for their fertility. The former was not far from Joppa, and the other was near Gilgal to the North of Jericho.

11. *Who set in order a table for Gad, and fill out a libation to Meni. M. L.*

It is most probable that *Gad* signifies the goddess of good fortune, and that *Meni* was the moon. To the latter of these words, which signifies *number*, there is an allusion in the prophecy.

Jerom says that in all cities, and especially in Egypt, and Alexandria, it was an antient custom of idolaters the last day of the year, or of the moon, to place a table furnished with dainties of various kinds, in order to procure a happy new year, or month. *Jurieu sur les dogmes*, p. 697.

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17. The new heavens and new earth evidently mean a new and better state of things.

20. This seems to be an intimation that in the last state of things men will live as long as the Antediluvians.

25. This beautiful image is repeated from a former prophecy, representing the peaceable and happy state of things in the last ages.

Ch. LXVI. In this chapter we have a kind of repetition of all the great subjects of this prophetic book, a reproof of the people for their hypocrisy and other vices, the punishment of the wicked among them, the future happy state of the nation in general, and the destruction of their invaders.

2. *And all these things are mine, saith the Lord,*
LXX. L.

Hesekiah repaired the temple after the profanation of it by Ahaz, and to this it is probable that the prophet here alludes. He properly reminds them that the most pleasing habitation of God was the heart of the humble and the pious.

3. Without virtue all services, tho' commanded by God, are offensive to him. Agreeable to this Solomon says Pr. xv, 8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.*

5. *Say ye to your brethren that hate you &c.*
LXX. L.

This seems to be a precept similar to that of our Saviour, *love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you.* This noble sentiment is not urged very distinctly

tinctly in any part of the Old Testament, tho' the love of the *stranger* is particularly recommended by Moses.

6. The transition in this verse to the punishment of the wicked and apostate Jews, and in the next to the sudden populousness of Palestine, after the return of its antient inhabitants, seems abrupt.

17. *In the gardens after the rites of Asbad*, i. e. a god of the Assyrians. L.

The word here rendered *the abomination* is probably the kid boiled in its mother's milk. In Ch. LXV, 34, the same is probably intended by the *broth of abominable things*.

The idolatrous Jews will perish together with their invaders, and to several of their heathenish practices the prophet here alludes. The word here rendered *mouse* Mr. Harris says is the *jerboa*, a small animal of the rat kind. Its hind legs are very large, and it jumps rather than runs.

19. This is an intimation that those of the invaders of Judea who shall escape from the great destruction that will be made of them, will be the means of spreading the account of it, and of the wonderful interposition of providence in that event; and that this would contribute in an eminent manner to the conviction and reformation of the world.

20. *On horses, and in litters, and in couches*. L. This last is a sort of vehicle much used in the East, consisting of a pair of hampers thrown across a camels back. L.

21. Many of other nations will join the Jews and be incorporated with them on their return. By being made *priests* and *Levites*, must be understood their being treated

treated with honour and respect. For none but those of the tribe of Levi could be Levites, and none besides those of the family of Aaron could be priests, even of the Hebrew nation.

24. This circumstance is more particularly enlarged upon by Zachariah, who says that deputies from all nations will join the Hebrews in the celebration of the feast of tabernacles. When they come they will see the marks of the great destruction that will have been made of those who had invaded the country, and be convinced by their own eyes of the divine interposition on that occasion. The language in which the prophet here expresses himself was adopted by our Saviour, to express the punishment of the wicked in a future state; but it cannot mean more than that their punishment will be exemplary and complete, not terminating till the end of it was accomplished. Indeed, an attention to these figures of speech implies this. For we cannot suppose that the fires which are to consume the carcases of these people will continue to burn forever, or that the worms that feed on them will always do so. In time they must be entirely consumed, and then both the fire, and the feeding of the worms, must cease.

NOTES

JEREMIAH

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J E R E M I A H.

JEREMIAH was of the order of priests of Anathoth, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, about three miles north of Jerusalem. He was very young when he was called to the prophetic office, and he continued in it at least forty two years, reckoning from the thirteenth of Josiah. In the reigns of the last kings of Judah the faithful discharge of the duties of his office was attended with much personal danger, the particulars of which we find in this book. Being carried into Egypt against his most earnest remonstrances, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, it is said that he was stoned to death by his countrymen, who were soon after severely punished in the conquest of that country by the Chaldeans, according to his prediction.

The subjects of the prophecies of Jeremiah very much resemble those of Isaiah, and other prophets, who had preceded him. He inveighs against the vices of the times in which he lived, denounces divine judgments on that account, and dwells pretty largely on the happiness that was reserved for his countrymen in the latter days. He also, like many other prophets, was commissioned to predict the fate of the neighbouring

ing nations. What more particularly exposed him to the ill will of his countrymen, especially the nobles, was his preremptorily foretelling the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. He also foretold that the duration of the Babylonish captivity would be seventy years. But he gives no intimation of any subsequent dispersion, any more than Isaiah, tho' his prophecies relate to a period far beyond that of the return from Babylon, and to a time that is yet future. No regard has been paid to the order of time in the arrangement of the different parts of this book, but it is pretty easy to reduce them to chronological order, as dates are annexed to most of them.

Ch. I. 6. From this circumstance it appears that Jeremiah must have been young when he had this vision, tho' probably not so young as Samuel when God spake to him the first time:

9. This being in a vision; there was perhaps the appearance of a human form as the symbol of the divine presence, as there was to Abraham when he received three angels, one of whom afterwards conversed with him in the character of Jehovah.

10. Not that the prophet himself had this great power to exercise at his pleasure, but that he would be commissioned by God to announce these events.

11. The Hebrew word for an *almond* is derived from a root which signifies to *be upon the watch*, and on this account the emblem was, no doubt, chosen.

14. The invasion of both the Assyrians and the Chaldeans was from the North. For tho' Chaldea lay to the East of Palestine, an army could not cross the desert
that

that was between the two countries in that direction. They were obliged to go first to the North, as Abraham did when he left Ur of the Chaldees. He first went to Padan Aram, in Mesopotamia, and thence travelled southward to go to the land of Canaan.

Ch. II. 1. The prophetic discourse that begins with this chapter is continued to the 6th verse of the next. It contains a pathetical expostulation with the tribe of Judah, on account of their forsaking their own God, who had done such great things for them, and addicting themselves to the worship of idols that could do nothing for them.

3. This is one of the many denunciations of the judgments of God against the enemies of the Hebrew nation.

5. To *walk in vanity*, signifies to worship idols, which are altogether vain and impotent.

6. The wilderness is called *a pit*, because it seemed to be a place out of which the people could not escape.

10. Chittim means the countries to the West of Palestine, perhaps Italy, or other countries situated on the Mediterranean, and Kedar was in Arabia which is to the East of Palestine. It therefore means, look in all, and the most opposite directions:

11. The attachment of all people to the religion of their fathers is a remarkable circumstance confirmed by all history, there being no example of any nation voluntarily and generally changing the religion derived by them from their ancestors, except the Israelites. This supplies an argument greatly in favour of the divine

origin of their religion: It was a mode of worship for which they had no predilection; and as they were always disposed to revolt from it, it was one that they would never have adopted of their own choice, but only as compelled by evidence of the most convincing kind.

In after ages the attachment of the Jews to their religion came to be as great as that of any other nation to their's; and therefore christianity could never have been introduced among them without the most unquestionable miracles. No ordinary evidence would have convinced any Jew of the truth of such a religion as the christian, which acknowledged a crucified malefactor for their Messiah. The attachment of all the heathens to their several religions at the time of the promulgation of christianity, was not at all abated from what it had ever been, but rather strengthened by time; and therefore they also must have been exceedingly averse to receive a new religion, especially from Jews, whom they generally held in great contempt, as the Jews, on their side, did them.

15. In this the prophet speaks of future events as if they were past.

16. Noph was Memphis, and Tahpantes was Daphnæ Pelusiacæ, or Pelusium, cities in Egypt. This probably refers to the invasion of the country by the Egyptians, when Jehoahaz was carried to Egypt and died there.

18. When the Israelites were attacked by the Egyptians they had recourse to the Assyrians; and when they were invaded by the Assyrians, they applied for help

help to the Egyptians; these being the two great rival powers of those times.

20. *Surely of a long time thou hast broken thy yoke, thou hast burst thy bonds. LXX. &c. Bl.*

21. The vines of Sorek were particularly excellent. It was from this valley that the spices sent out by Moses brought a bunch of grapes, which was carried on a pole by two men.

22. What is here called *nitre*, the Latins called *natrum*. It was a fossil alkaline earth, which in some measure answered the purpose of soap.

23. This was probably the valley of the son of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, which was infamous for idolatrous rites, and especially for the sacrificing of children to Molock.

24. The eagerness with which the Israelites ran into idolatry, is compared to the fierceness and intractableness of these wild and swift animals at the season of copulation.

25. That is, take care lest, in consequence of your addictedness to idolatry, you be reduced to the distressed situation which had been threatened by Moses when he said (Deut. xxviii, 48) *Thou shalt serve thine enemies in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in the want of all things*; or like what was prophesied concerning the Egyptian captives, in Is. xx, 4, who went naked and barefoot.

33. Calamity is here personified. As the people had found out the way to idol worship, calamity would find its way to them.

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34. Their idolatrous practices had not been concealed. Even the blood they had shed in them had not been covered with earth, as blood in general was directed to be, but was sprinkled upon the oaks under which they had erected their altars. They had not been at all ashamed of their ways.

36. They had been disappointed in their expectations from the Assyrians in the time of king Ahaz, when we read (2 Chron xxviii, 20) *they distressed him but strengthened him not*; and they are now threatened with no better success from their application to the Egyptians. And in the reign of Zedekiah, when they expected assistance from Egypt, Jeremiah was directed to inform them (Ch. xxxvii, 7) that Pharaoh's army, which was come forth to help them, would return to Egypt into their own land, and that the Chaldeans would come and take the city; which accordingly came to pass.

37. To cover the head was a mark of deep affliction. Thus Tamar, after being deflowered by Amnon, not only *put ashes on her head* (2 Sam, xiii, 19) but *laid her hand on her head, and went out crying*. And when David fled from Absalom we read 2, Sam. xv: 30, *he ascended the mount of Olives, weeping as he went, and had his head covered; and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up weeping as they went*.

Ch. III. 1 Tho' according to the law of Moses, a woman divorced on account of adultery could not be taken again, so great was the affection that Jehovah retained for his people, that he would receive them again

gain after all their idolatries, if they would sincerely return to him.

2. The eagerness with which the Arabs watch for travellers is particularly described by Sir John Chardin. "The Arabs," he says, "watch for Caravans with the greatest avidity, looking about them on all sides, raising themselves up on their horses, running here and there to see if they cannot perceive any smoke, or dust, or track on the ground, or any other mark of people passing along." *Harmer* Vol. 1. Ch. 2. Obs. 7.

3. The former rain was after the drought of summer, and prepared the ground for ploughing, and the latter rain was about the middle of April, which was of use for swelling and filling the corn before harvest; but all the winter months in that country are more or less rainy. God had already chastised them in some measure, but without any good effect.

6. The prophecy, or discourse, which begins at this verse is continued to the end of the sixth chapter. It contains a solemn reproof of the people of Judah for imitating the idolatry of the ten tribes, which were then gone into captivity, a denunciation of divine judgments in consequence of this, but with a promise of forgiveness on their repentance, and a prospect of happier times hereafter. This prophecy was delivered in the reign of the pious Josiah. But tho' he did every thing in his power to promote a reformation, the people did not sincerely join him, and therefore their hypocrisy is particularly inveighed against:

8. *And she saw,* MSS.

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12 The

12. The ten tribes were carried captive into Media, which was to the North of Palestine.

16. This is a repetition, with some change in the language, of the glorious promises of God to the Hebrew nation in the latter days, when the people in general will be virtuous, and flourishing beyond what they had ever been before. The peculiar presence of God, instead of being confined to the *mercy seat*, on the ark, would fill the whole city. And it is observable, that in Ezekiel's description of the temple that is to be erected hereafter, no mention is made of any ark.

18. Here the joint return, and the future union, of all the twelve tribes, are distinctly mentioned.

23. This probably refers to their idolatrous rites upon the hills, and to the noisy and riotous manner in which they were usually celebrated.

24. Meaning their idols, of which they were now ashamed.

Ch. IV. 1. With a small alteration in the Hebrew it will be, *If thou wilt return unto me, O Israel, thou shalt abide*; which will correspond to the next clause, *And if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight thou shalt not remove*.

6. This is an intimation of the approach of the Chaldeans, and of the conquest of the country.

10. God permitted them to be deceived by the false prophets. But according to the Arabic version this is not the prophet, but of the people who had taken the false prophets for true ones, and had been deceived by them; and this was probably agreeable to the uncorrupted original.

12. *Shall come unto him.* MSS.

15 Their

15. Their idolatry was not concealed, but published, especially in those places to the North of Jerusalem from which their enemies would make their approach.

16. By *watchers* are meant hostile armies, which would besiege their cities, and prevent any escape from them.

17. As there are few hedges in the East valuable products are often watched with much care, especially near to a public road.

20. All the furniture of their houses.

23. A figurative description of the great desolation of the country:

Ch. V. 2. Those of them who did not wholly abandon their religion, but when they swore, swore by the name of Jehovah, were hypocritical and immoral.

15. The language of Chaldea was considerably different from the Hebrew, tho' they were derived from the same stock.

28. Tho' they oppressed the innocent, they gave the wicked even more than they claimed.

30. With a little alteration it will be, *tho' thou anointest thy face with painting*, which is agreeable to the LXX.

Ch. VI. 1. Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin, and the places here mentioned were in the neighbourhood of it, about twelve miles to the South.

20. A very costly kind of incense was made for the service of the temple. But the punctuality of the people in these rites would avail them nothing without moral virtue. The cane was probably the sugar cane which

which was a native of the East, and thence was carried to the West Indies.

27. *I have appointed thee to make an assay among my people, as to the gold thereof.* LXX. Bl.

The prophet is here compared to an assay master, to try the purity of the people, and they were found to resemble base metal.

29. Lead was made use of in refining metals.

Ch. VII. 1. From this place to the end of the tenth chapter is one prophetic discourse, containing an earnest exhortation with the people on account of their idolatry and vices, promising them favour on their repentance, but threatening them with extermination if they did not repent. They are particularly warned against trusting to the flattering promises of their false prophets.

4. It is evident from this, that their addictedness to idolatry, great as it was, did not lead them to abandon their faith in their own God. They even thought they were under his protection, and that he would not suffer his temple to be destroyed by any foreign nation.

12. They might see by the example of Shiloh, which was in the kingdom of Israel, that a place consecrated to Jehovah was not on that account exempt from the heaviest judgments. That place, as well as the rest of the country which had belonged to the ten tribes, was then in the possession of the Assyrians, having been abandoned by God on account of the idolatry of the inhabitants.

23 It

23. It does not mean that no religious rites, such as sacrifices, had been appointed. For the most particular directions are given concerning them in the books of Moses, but that less stress had always been laid upon every thing of this kind than upon moral virtue, and that their transgressing these precepts, even so far as to eat the flesh of burnt offerings, which were directed to be wholly consumed, was a small thing compared to the violation of moral duties.

29. Tho' the Nazarites were not to cut their hair, yet so great was this occasion for mourning, in which this was generally practised, that the prophet, tho' a Nazarite, was directed to pay no regard to this vow, but to cut off his hair, and appear in mourning.

31. This was the place in the valley in which the fires were made for sacrificing children to Molock, and is thought to have had this name from the *drums* that were used to stifle the cries of the children that were burned.

Ch. VIII. 1. Josephus says that great treasures were deposited in the sepulchres of the kings, and that they were untouched till the pontificate of John Hircanus, who opened one of the cells, and took out of it three thousand talents of silver. Afterwards Herod opened another, and took out of it a very considerable sum. As it is not at all probable that such a treasure as this would escape the Chaldeans, or have been spared by them, the account of Josephus is very improbable. However the prophecy has, no doubt, been fulfilled; since neither

treasures

treasures, nor even stones, are now to be found in the place.

4. Repentance was still possible, and the predicted calamity to be avoided.

7. These birds have a regular time for their migrations, but they return with the same regularity; whereas the Israelites had gone away without any return.

8. It appears from this that the scribes of these times perverted the sense of their scriptures, a circumstance which shews that, notwithstanding the apostacy of the people, they still retained a respect for the laws of Moses, and never thought that there was any imposture in the case:

14. In these verses the prophet, or some of the people, are the speaker, exhorting their neighbours to leave the open and defenceless villages, and take refuge in the fortified cities against the time of the invasion. The word that is rendered *hemlock* in this place may signify any bitter herb or plant. Dan was in the northern extremity of the country, the first place that the Chaldeans would come to.

17. In the East there is a method of charming serpents, so that they may be handled with impunity. It is practised at this day, but it is not understood by any Europeans.

19. Is not Jehovah the natural protector of Zion? How then can it be deserted and abandoned to the enemy? It is replied, that it was not owing to any want of power in Jehovah, but he abandoned it on account of the idolatries that were practised in it.

20 They

20. They probably expected relief from the march of the Egyptians ; but the season was over, and no help came.

22. This was a resinous substance, famous for its medicinal qualities, tho' it is not now found in those parts, unless, which is not improbable, it be the resin of the terebinthus, which abounds in that part of the country, and is used in curing wounds. The meaning is, was the country wholly unprovided with the means of better knowledge, so that they could not recover from the wrong steps that they had taken ?

Ch. IX. 2. Such a temporary hut, or place of shelter, as travellers usually erected, when they found no caravansera, or building expressly provided for their accommodation, in a journey. So poor a place as this the prophet preferred to living with a vicious and degenerate people.

7. He would apply the furnace of affliction to purify them.

11. This must have been a proverbial expression to denote desolation in general. For crocodiles, which is the probable meaning of the word rendered dragons, frequent rivers or watery places only.

16. This is the very language of Moses when he predicted their general dispersion. Lev. xxvi, 23.

17. Unnatural as it seems to us, public mourning is a profession in the East, practised by women who study the most doleful language, and tones to excite sorrow.

22. The reaper did not himself gather the corn that he cut, but left it to another person who came after him.

him. Without this, the corn would remain in the ground and be lost.

24. This is a most excellent moral sentiment, signifying that there was no safety for any people but in the favour of God, and that this could not be claimed by any but the pious.

26. In the invasion of the Chaldeans all these people would suffer. By the last are probably meant some of the Arabs whose calamity is more particularly described by *Isaiah xxi, 13*. *Though the Israelites were not exactly in the same predicament with the neighbouring nations, who were uncircumcised, they were so in their hearts, all their uncleanness remaining there.*

Ch. X. The folly of idol worship is finely exposed in this chapter, and the power of the true God enlarged on, in opposition to the gods of the heathens. It closes with an intimation of the calamity that would be brought upon the country in consequence of the addictedness of the inhabitants to idolatry.

2. A great object of the heathen religions was to pry into futurity, and especially by observing appearances in the heavens. Hence was derived the science of *astrology*, or the prognostication of future events from the position of the planets. They had also many other modes of divination. All these observances, which have no foundation in nature, are justly reprobated in the laws of Moses, and the folly of them is exposed in this place.

8. The consideration of the manner in which a god is made out of a piece of wood, is sufficient to expose the folly of worshipping the idol.

9 Uphaz

9. Uphaz may either have been a place from which very fine gold was brought, or a mistake in the copy for *Ophir*, which is frequently mentioned as producing the finest gold.

The art of dying was little known among the ancients, and splendid colours, especially blue and purple, were much esteemed. With clothes of these colours they clothed the images of their gods, as appears from this passage, and the Apocryphal book of Baruch, Ch. vi, 12. *Why cannot these gods save themselves from rust and moths, tho' they be covered with purple raiment.* v. 22. *Ye shall know them to be no gods, by the bright purple which rots upon them:*

11. This verse is not in the Hebrew, but in the Chaldee language, in which it is very improbable that Jeremiah should write at all, and much more a single verse, which has no connection with any other. It is, therefore, suspected to be an interpolation, perhaps during the time of the Babylonish captivity, inserted first in the margin, and afterwards copied into the text. It is omitted in one MSS.

19. The speaker is some of the people of the country lamenting their condition, but acknowledging the justice of God in it.

25. *And upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name.* MSS.

Ch. XI. 1. The prophecy in this and the following chapter contains a complaint of the departure of the Israelites from the covenant that God had made with them, and a threatening of punishment on that account, especially of the inhabitants of Anathoth, who had

had threatened the life of the prophet. It closes, however, with a promise of happy times hereafter, when the people would be reformed.

13. *Bosbeth* is frequently put for *Baal*. The former is not here in the LXX.

15. That is, shall I accept their sacrifices, when there is no real piety from which they proceed?

By the help of the LXX, we get the following translation, *What has my beloved to do in my house, to work her wickedness. Will vows, or holy flesh, make it to pass, (or remove it) from thee? Woe thou doest evil shalt thou escape?*

19. They seem to have thought that by destroying the prophet they could prevent the effect of his denunciations, as if he had been the cause of all the evils they suffered. Thus Ahab said to Elijah 1 Kings xviii, 17. *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* Perhaps in both the cases the persons offended only wished to free themselves from the pain which the prophet gave them, without any regard to the consequences.

20. It was not the meek spirit of the gospel with which this prophet, or David was animated, tho' they cannot be much condemned for praying for the punishment of those who well deserved it.

Ch. XII. 4. *God shall not see our ways.* LXX.

That is, because he will not concern himself about it, or bring us to judgment.

5. This seems to be the answer of God to the prophet, informing him that he would have greater difficulties to struggle with than any that he had yet met with, that his trials at present, while the country was
at

at peace, were by no means so great as they would be when the war was come, and like a swelling river would overflow the whole country.

9. What bird this is, is unknown, but by its name in Hebrew it should be one with variously coloured feathers. As the people had acted the part of a ravenous beast with respect to God, he calls upon other ravenous beasts and birds of prey, to devour them ; meaning their enemies in the neighbouring nations.

16. This prophecy seems to respect the most distant times, when other nations will be converted to the worship of the true God, and when those who will not, and shew it by refusing to send to worship at the feast of tabernacles shall, according to the prophecies of Zachariah Ch. xiv. 18) be exemplarily punished.

Ch. XIII. The prophecy contained in this chapter is another denunciation of judgments on account of the idolatry of the people expressed by an emblem. It was probably delivered in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.

1. The emblem of a *girdle*, which is both a very essential and an ornamental part of the oriental dress, is made use of to signify that God had intended to place the Hebrew nation in a place of high distinction with respect to himself. What is meant by not putting the girdle into water does not appear. It is by some supposed to signify that it was not to be washed, so as to be made clean, that it might better represent the polluted state of the people.

4. This is supposed to have passed in a vision, and the prophet's relating this as a vision would have the same

same effect as if he had actually made so long and troublesome a journey for the purpose. The girdle was carried to the Euphrates, to signify the captivity of the people to Babylon, which was upon that river.

12. The people, not being aware that he spoke metaphorically, laughed at the triteness of his observation; tho' to *drink of a cup* filled with wine, and especially mixed with intoxicating ingredients, was a well known emblem, to signify being made to taste, as it were, of calamity.

16. Mountains of gloom may signify those mountainous places in which they usually dug their sepulchres.

18. The LXX has, *For he shall cast down from your head the crown of your glory.*

20. What is become of thy numerous inhabitants?

21. There is much obscurity in this verse. It is supposed to mean that by their idolatry they put themselves out of the protection of the Divine Being, and thereby gave other nations an advantage over them.

23. It is evident from this that the Cushites were of a very dark complexion, if not absolutely black; and therefore they could not be Arabs, who are but little darker than the Jews. But some of the Cushites were settled on the Eastern side of the Red sea, and others in Ethiopia, on the Western side of it.

25. Perhaps with a little alteration, and the help of the LXX, we may translate *the portion of thy rebellion*, or disobedience.

26. It was a punishment of lewd women to expose them naked, than which nothing was more opprobrious.

14. The

Ch. XIV. The prophecy contained in this and the following chapter, was probably delivered not long after the preceding. The country had suffered by a long continued drought, and yet the false prophets had promised them deliverance from all their afflictions. Here the Divine Being denounces judgments against the prophets, as well as against the people at large, and declares he will not be intreated for them.

2. By the gate we are to understand the people, who on all public occasions were assembled there. Courts of judicature were held there.

4. *For the labour of the fields has failed.* LXX.

8. That is, as if he had no interest in it.

18. Go about as those who had goods to sell.

Ch. XV. 4. This was not fulfilled at the time of the Babylonish captivity; but with many other prophecies looks to a more distant time than the prophet himself apprehended.

8. He would send Nebuchadnezzar, a person chosen and appointed by him to execute his sentence against Jerusalem, the metropolis of the country.

9. Notwithstanding the populousness of the city, it would be exhausted of its strength.

10. Here the prophet complains of the harsh treatment he met with for telling wholesome truths, tho' he was not engaged in any such business as usually occasioned contention.

11. *They have reviled me all of them, saith Jehovah. Have I not brought thee off advantageously? Have I not stood by thee in the time of evil?* MS. Bl.

The Divine Being, to reconcile him to the treatment he had met with, says that they had reviled even himself ; but that he would take his part, and prevent the effects of their malice.

12. God had promised to make him *an iron pillar*, Ch. i. 18, which they could not break, and therefore he had nothing to fear from them. Iron from the North was probably of the hardest kind. It is said that steel was invented by the *Chalybes* on the Euxine sea, which is north of Palestine ; and that this substance had its name from the people who manufactured it. But the word rendered steel, properly signifies copper or brass.

13. That is, not making any compensation, but as a punishment for their sins.

16. He was distinguished from the other prophets being called *the prophet of Jehovah*.

18. Travellers say that there is sometimes a kind of vapour on the hot sand, which at a distance might be taken for a lake of water, but which disappears on approaching it ; and to this there may be an allusion in this place.

19. If he would implicitly follow his directions, his enemies would seek to him, and he would have no occasion to court their favour, or fear their displeasure.

Ch. XVI. In this prophecy, which is continued to the 19th verse of the next chapter, the prophet is directed not to marry, or to attend any public meetings either of joy or sorrow ; to signify that all the people were devoted to destruction for their idolatry and their vices. But it concludes with a promise of happy times after their return from their final dispersion.

6 The .

6. The Israelites were forbidden to cut, or any way to disfigure themselves *for the dead*, as the heathens did, Lev. xix, 28. Deut. xiv, 1. Since, however, this was generally practised by the Jews; it is thought by many to be forbidden only as an act of heathen worship, such as was practised by the priests of Baal, who cut and flashed themselves in order to engage the attention of their god; *the dead* meaning *idols* which had no life. But others think that the practice was forbidden absolutely; the reason given for it being that they were a holy people to the Lord, so that disfiguring themselves was a dishonour to him; for the same reason that the high priest must have no maim, but have all his members perfect. However, the phrase, *holy to the Lord*, may have been used as in opposition to other deities, and refer to idolatrous practices only.

7. It was customary for the friends of the mourning family to carry provisions to the house, and invite them to take refreshment, on the idea that they might have neglected to take proper nourishment, and hence might come the custom of making a kind of feast on such occasions.

13. This was foretold by Moses, and has been abundantly fulfilled with respect to the ten tribes, who are either heathens or Mahometans. Also, many of the Jews in Spain and Portugal conform to the Catholic worship, which is clearly idolatrous.

14. This is certainly a prophecy that respects a time far beyond that of the return from Babylon, even their return from their present dispersion, which will be an event of so much more importance than their

deliverance from Egypt, that this will be ~~in a~~ manner forgotten.

19. This also respects a time that is yet future, when all nations will be brought to acknowledge the true God, and join with the Jews in the worship of him.

Ch. XVII. 1. These are metaphorical expressions to denote that their addictedness to idolatry was deeply rooted.

4. That is, thou shalt no longer live in thy former splendour.

11. This bird is probably the woodcock. To this that man is compared who takes what does not belong to him ; and here such persons are threatened with being deprived of their ill gotten goods, and suffering for their felonious taking of them.

13. They who learn to write make letters upon the dust. Our Saviour, we read, amused himself with writing on the ground. Such writing is easily effaced.

15. This is the language of open profaneness, similar to what we meet with in some passages of Isaiah and other prophets.

16. The prophet appeals to God, to witness that the disasters which he foretold were not what he wished to happen, but what he was directed to announce.

19. Here the prophet is directed to admonish the people in the most earnest manner, about the observances of the sabbath, which appears to have been much neglected. They are assured of the divine favour in case of obedience, and threatened with the severest punishments for their disobedience.

CII.

Ch. XVIII. 1. This chapter and the two following (which must have been delivered in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim) have a connection. They relate to the denunciation of judgments against the country, beginning with an emblematical representation taken from the business of a potter, to shew the absolute right which the Divine Being had over all nations, to dispose of them as he should see fit. The prophet, however, exhorts to repentance, as the only means of averting the threatened judgments. This was the occasion of a conspiracy against his life, on which he appeals to God for justice.

4. Two stones, it is thought, were used in this business, one fixed, and the other on which the clay was placed, made to turn round upon it.

14. Lebanon, being a very high mountain, was always covered with snow. To expect that this snow would melt sooner than on the lower grounds was absurd; so also would be the conduct of men in bringing water from a distance by means of a canal, when they had easy access to natural springs. But neither of these would be so preposterous as the conduct of the Israelites, in abandoning their religion. The former of these allusions has but little force or propriety and the translation of this passage is very uncertain.

18. That is, let us put him to silence, but by what means does not distinctly appear.

21. These imprecations are certainly not agreeable to the spirit of the gospel, which directs us, Mat. v, 44, *to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.*

Ch. XIX. The prophet is here directed to announce the divine judgments by means of a striking emblem, the breaking of a potters vessel in the presence of the elders of the nation, and the priests ; which could not fail to attract the greatest attention, and at the same time expose himself to danger.

2. This gate was probably that which is called the *dung gate*, from the filth of the city being carried out at it, to be thrown into the brook Kedron, which ran through that valley.

7. In what manner this prophecy was fulfilled does not appear ; but perhaps some particular disaster befell the people in this place during the siege of the city. Here it may be observed, that if the book had been a forgery of later times, care would no doubt, have been taken to shew that the prediction had been fulfilled. For otherwise it could not have answered the purpose of the forger.

14. To repeat the solemn denunciation of divine judgments in this the most public of all places, was calculated to draw the greatest possible attention to it.

Ch. XX. 1. We see here that it was not without reason that Jeremiah expected great opposition, and danger, from the discharge of his duty as a prophet. He was apprehended and confined, as a disturber of the public peace, on the pretence, no doubt, of being a false prophet. The priests were distributed into twenty four courses, under so many heads of families, by king David. These officiated in their turns, and the chief of each under the high priest, commanded in the temple and its precincts.

3 This

3. This word signifies *terror all about*, intimating that whatever way he should look, he would see objects of terror.

7. He was encouraged by the prospects that were held out to him to undertake the office of a prophet, but he perhaps found more difficulty and opposition than he had looked for.

9. He found, upon reflection, that he could not refrain from delivering what he had been commissioned by God to deliver, whatever difficulties it brought him into.

10. He overheard, or was informed, that his enemies would endeavour to intimidate him by reports of the danger to which he exposed himself.

14. This lamentation of the prophet, on brooding over his misfortunes, is not to be understood literally, but as a poetical or figurative exaggeration, which those who relish oriental composition will admire.

Ch. XXI. 1. This prophecy was probably delivered in the ninth year of Zedekiah, in the expectation of hostility from Nebuchadnezzar; and therefore it is out of its proper place, if the design of the compiler was to arrange them in chronological order.

13. This was probably *Zion*, an eminence in Jerusalem, the top of which had been levelled, and part of it perhaps hollowed out; or there might have been a hollow place in it originally. It was the strongest part of the city. The Jebusites thought it to be impregnable, and derided the attempts of David to take it.

14. There is much uncertainty in the rendering of this passage. It was probably so written that the true

B b 4

rendering

rendering would be, *I will kindle a burning and consuming fire*, that is one that will burn and consume all around it.

Ch. XXII, After the solemn warning of the people in the valley, and then at the temple, the prophet is here directed to go to the palace, and deliver the admonition to the king in person ; announcing his fate, and that of his family ; but he closes the prediction with mentioning the glorious times in future, so often predicted before.]

6. By the summit of Lebanon, which was a very high mountain, is meant the royal family, which had been made rich and flourishing like Gilead, a part of the country remarkable for its fertility. But the same power which had raised it, could depress it.

11. This Shallum must have been the same person with Jehoahaz, who was carried into Egypt by Pharaoh Necho after a reign of three months, and in that country he died. To reconcile this with 1 Chron. iii, 15, where the sons of Josiah are said to be *Johanan, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah and Shallum*, it is thought that Shallum ought to have been placed before Zedekiah, and that Johanan the eldest died before his father, or that he might have been set aside as not fit to reign, which is not uncommon in the East to this day ; the absolute right of primogeniture having never been acknowledged, tho' the disregard of it, is often the occasion of civil wars.

15. The antient versions of this verse differ very much, so that there is probably some error in our present

sent Hebrew copies, which it may be impossible to rectify. His father was the good king Josiah, whose example was recommended to him.

19. There is some difficulty in adjusting the events of the reign of Jehoiakim with respect to the invasion of his kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar. But it is probable, that after submitting to the king of Babylon, he revolted, and being defeated and taken by the troops of the neighbouring nations in alliance with the Chaldeans, he died in prison, and that his body was treated in the manner here described. Part of the lamentation would be naturally addressed to the sister, or queen, or the nearest female relation, who had suffered so great a loss. I must observe again, that had the books of scriptures been forgeries, no such difficulties as these would have been left in them.

20. These places were in the extreme boundary of the country, from which it is here supposed the people might call to their neighbours for assistance.

24. This is the same with Jeconiah, or Jehoakin, the son of Jehoiakim, who was carried to Babylon and died there, tho' he was received into favour by Evil-merodach after the death of Nebuchadnezzar. It was probably by the casual omission of a letter that *Coniah* came to be written for *Jeconiah*.

29. *O land, land*, meaning the land of Judah, and not the whole earth.

30 By *childless* may perhaps be meant that he should have no son to survive him, or to reign after him; for mention is made of his children, 1 Chron. iii, 17.

Ch:

Ch. XXIII. 3. This respects the final return, and the peaceable and permanent settlement of the Israelites in their own land.

5. This must mean the Messiah, or that prince of the house of David, who will then reign.

6. He is so called from his regard to justice and equity in his administration.

7. This is repeated from Ch. xvi, 14, perhaps for the farther confirmation of so important a circumstance.

9. This prophecy, tho' it has a separate title, was probably delivered at the same time with the preceding. The prophet was, as it were, stupified with grief and astonishment, at the enormous wickedness of which he was witness.

10—*Surely because of these the land mourneth.*
LXX. Bl.

26. A sentiment which a person wished to express, but is restrained from doing it, is compared to fire within him, burning him, and in a manner forcing a passage out.

28. They were at liberty to tell their own sentiments or conjectures, but not to mix them with what they pretended to receive from God. The former is compared to *chaff*, but the words of God, or a real revelation, to *wheat*.

30. To *purloin* the words of God may mean their pretending to have them when they had not, but spake from their own suggestions.

32. It had been usual to call a prophecy, especially one that portended evil, a *burden*. This term profane persons turned into ridicule, as if it was a thing that

was

was not to be borne, or received. This language the prophet is directed to retort upon them, and to say that they themselves were the burden in this sense of the word, and to be thrown off as such, being too heavy to be borne with any longer.

36. This term having been perverted and abused, was not to be used any more to express the same thing. But every man's own words would deserve to be called a burden with respect to himself, or something by which he would be oppressed, and for which he should suffer.

Ch. XXIV. This vision must be referred to the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah. Under the image of good and bad figs, the Divine Being intimates his determination with respect to those who were gone into captivity, and those who remained in the country, and were not reformed.

7. This rather refers to their final return from their general dispersion, than to this from Babylon.

10. This threat was not executed in its full extent before the war in the time of the emperor Adrian, from which the present general dispersion commenced.

Ch. XXV. This prophecy followed that in Ch. xxii and xxiii, and must have been delivered when Nebuchadnezzar was entering upon his expedition against Palestine. It contains severe reproofs for the obstinacy of the people, in paying no regard to the admonitions of the prophets, and announces the greatest calamities that could befall them; but with an intimation that their enemies would suffer in their turn, and an assurance

rance that the captivity at Babylon would continue only seventy years.

1. This is computing the beginning of his reign from the time of his being associated with his father, which was two years before his death, from which the Chaldeans dated his reign.

10. In the East the first work that is done in families in a morning is grinding the corn with handmills, for the consumption of the day; and as this is done in all families at the same time, the noise that it makes is considerable. In the evening all the lamps are lighted of course, so that these two circumstances are marks of a place being well inhabited, and enjoying plenty. The houses in Egypt are never without light. The poorest people would retrench part of their food rather than neglect it. Thus Job expresses a state of utter desolation when he says, *How often is the candle of the wicked put out.*

11. This period of *seventy years*, must, no doubt, terminate with the fall of the Babylonish empire by the conquest of Cyrus, and must commence at the date of this prophecy, when Nebuchadnezzar first invaded Palestine.

13. These prophecies are given all together, from Ch. xLvi to Lvi, but must have been delivered before this time.

14. All those nations were subject to the Persians, Greeks, and Romans.

17. It is probable that these prophecies were solemnly announced to these nations by ambassadors, or other persons residing at Jerusalem. For it can hardly
be

be supposed that Jeremiah went in person to all these countries for the purpose, any more than he actually presented to them a cup, as an emblem of what he announced:

19. *And all the kings of the mingled people.* MSS.

By the *intermingled people* are thought to be meant foreigners residing in Egypt, on account of intermarriages, &c.

The people here referred to are thought by Mr. Bruce to be a nation inhabiting to the South of Abyssinia, some of them being those that fled from Canaan on the conquest of that country by Joshua. About 1600 B. C. it was, according to the chronicle of Afcum, a book thought to be of great antiquity, wasted by a flood. They are called the *mingled people* in Ch. xiv, 24, and Ez. xxx, 5. *Travels*, p. 398.

20. The land of Uz was the country of Job, but where it was situated, except somewhere in Arabia, is uncertain.

22. The *region by the sea side* is some part of Arabia bordering on the sea.

23. Dedan was one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. Teman was one of the sons of Ishmael. They were both settled somewhere in Arabia. Buz was the brother of Uz, and settled probably in his neighbourhood. Those that had their *coast insulated*, Mr. Blaney supposes to be the inhabitants of those parts of Arabia, which were situated towards the narrower parts of it.

25. Zimran was one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. Elam was Persia. Concerning any calamity befalling

befalling Media, history is silent. Perhaps it may refer to the invasion of the Scythians, which Herodotus says lasted twenty eight years, in which time they were masters of the whole country.

26. By the *sides* of the North may be meant Syria, and other countries which were situated in the northern parts of the Babylonian empire. The king of *Sheshac* means the king of Babylon, as appears from Ch. LI, 41; but why he should be so called is uncertain.

34. A very slight alteration in a Hebrew word will make this *like a potters vessel*, which is a very common metaphor in the scriptures. I cannot help thinking that this account of a great judgment on all the inhabitants of the earth, and especially on princes, refers to that future time which is the subject of so many prophecies, tho' it was, no doubt, in some qualified sense fulfilled by the conquests of the Chaldeans.

Ch. XXVI. This chapter is partly historical and partly prophetic, announcing heavy judgments if the people did not repent; and it was with much difficulty that the prophet escaped being put to death for his boldness.

8. We here find prophets among those who apprehended Jeremiah. They were bodies of men devoted to the study of the law, and who instructed others in it, like the Scribes in the time of our Saviour. From this body, the Divine Being seems in general to have chosen those whom he commissioned to speak in his name. But at this time they appear to have been as corrupt as the rest of the people. It is evident, however, from the whole of this narrative, that the worship of

of Jehovah was not abandoned. Jeremiah went to the temple, and probably at the time of one of the public festivals, to meet the persons against whom he was to remonstrate. This shews that, in the worst of times, the divine mission of Moses was not denied, only it was imagined that some advantage would be derived from joining the rites of other religions with those of his, notwithstanding the express prohibition of every thing of the kind.

18. This passage is found in Micah, Ch. iii, 12.

20. It is uncertain whether this account of Urijah was alleged at the time, or added by the writer as an historian. It certainly would not have contributed to the release of the prophet, unless the king and the people had repented, and been concerned for having put Urijah to death, which does not appear to have been the case.

23. He was ignominiously buried with the lowest of the people, and not in so respectable a manner as it is probable persons of the order of prophets generally were.

Ch. XXVII. This chapter and the following are chiefly historical, and relate to the fourth year of Zedekiah, when ambassadors came to him from the neighbouring nations to engage him to join with them against the king of Babylon.

1. In the common copies of the Hebrew text there is *Jehoiakim* instead of *Zedekiah*, which the history absolutely requires, and which one MS. authorizes.

7. This was verified in the overthrow of the Babylonian

lonian empire, in the reign of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. This shews that the preceding prophecy was delivered in the fourth year of Zedekiah:

8. *Of war, of famine, and of pestilence.* MSS.

13. The LXX has, *I will make for them.*

16. This is certainly the fairest test of the authenticity of the prophecies of Jeremiah; and as the prediction was delivered in the fifth month, he must have had great confidence in the authority from which he spake; and the fulfillment, which was within two months, was much sooner than was necessary for his purpose.

Ch. XXIX. 1. This chapter evidently contains the substance of *two letters* written by Jeremiah to the captives at Babylon, tho' not distinguished in our present copies, and farther disordered by the transposition of a verse out of its proper place. He encourages them to acquiesce in their situation, as it would certainly continue seventy years and no longer. And he announces divine judgments against those prophets who told them the contrary.

10. It is evident from this, that the seventy years captivity announced by Jeremiah, commenced with that in the reign of Jehoiakim, and therefore would terminate at the accession of Cyrus. But as seventy years likewise intervened between the destruction of the city and the temple under Zedekiah, and the rebuilding of the latter under Darius, when the prophet Zechariah said (Ch. i, 12) that *God had had indignation against them three score and ten years*, and that Darius carried into effect

effect what Cyrus had decreed, but which had been obstructed, these last seventy years may be those that are considered in the prophecies of Daniel, especially as his dates of subsequent events respect the time of Darius, and not that of Cyrus.

14. It is very probable that, in the idea of the prophet, the return from the Babylonish captivity was the same with the final return spoken of by Isaiah; since the same language is made use of viz. *gathered from all nations*. The prophets did not always understand the full extent of their own predictions.

18. There is another captivity and dispersion announced, distinct from that under Jehoiakim, but nothing is said concerning the termination of it.

21. Here is evidently the beginning of the second letter, referring to the former, and v. 15 as evidently belongs to this place. It interrupts the connection where it now stands, and comes in naturally here, and the versions of the Seventy authorize the transposition. The fate of these false prophets, so peremptorily announced by Jeremiah, to take place within a limited time; must, when accomplished, have established his authority beyond all contradiction.

22. They were probably treated as Daniel's three friends were afterwards.

23. It is thought by the Jews that these were the two elders who attempted the chastity of Sufanna, and therefore that the story has some foundation in truth, tho' the circumstances are differently represented in the Apocryphal history.

26. It seems evident from this, that the high priests had authority over persons who pretended to prophecy, and punished those whom they judged to be impostors.

28. This is a plain indication that it is part of a second letter, since it refers to a former.

Ch. XXX In this chapter and the following we have a prophecy of the same import with many in Isaiah; announcing the happy state of the Hebrew nation in some future time, after a sufficient punishment of all their sins, and the destruction of all their enemies; a state that is to be permanent, and to comprehend the ten tribes as well as those of Judah.

3. Israel being here joined to Judah, shews that this prophecy looks to a time much more distant than that of the return from Babylon which was confined to the Jews.

9. They will be governed by princes descended from David, according to the prophecies of Isaiah.

11.—*And will not make thee altogether desolate;*
Chal. Bl.

This prophecy, in agreement with many others, announces the utter destruction of all the nations that shall have oppressed the Jews; and this certainly comprehends all the kingdoms of Europe that have been parts of the Roman empire, and which are represented by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's great image, which is to be broken in pieces. This is confirmed v. 16.

Ch. XXXI. 3.—*Appeared of old unto him.* LXX.

7. By the chief of the nations must be understood the

the united Hebrew nation, destined to be the most distinguished on the face of the earth.

11. Weeping in this place may intimate repentance for their sins, joined with supplication for mercy ; or it may be a weeping for joy. It signifies some state of great emotion.

15. Rachel, one of the wives of Jacob, is here figuratively introduced, as weeping over the desolate state of her offspring, and she is comforted with a prospect of their future prosperous state. Ramah was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, near the place where Rachel died, and was buried. Now she is represented raised from the dead, and looking about her, finds the country in a state of desolation, desolate of inhabitants.

18. Ephraim, the chief of the ten tribes, is in like manner figuratively introduced, lamenting his fallen state, and expressing his repentance for the sins which had been the occasion of it.

19. The LXX has, *After my captivity I repented*, agreeable to a small change in a Hebrew word. To smite upon the thigh is a common expression of grief in the East. Xenophon says that when Cyrus heard of the death of a friend, he smote his thigh. The custom was adopted by the Greeks.

22. The Hebrew nation is called a *virgin*, as a weak defenceless woman, who might therefore be afraid of a strong man, in whose power she was. But the Divine Being encourages her with the prospect of his interposing in her favour, and enabling her, tho' a woman, to overcome the strongest man. The meaning is, that

the Hebrew nation, tho' weak and dispersed, would find no power able to prevent their re-establishment.

According to the LXX it is, *How long wilt thou withdraw thyself O wandering daughter. For Jehovah will perform a new work in the land. Every one shall go about in safety.* These translations must have a reading very different from the present Hebrew.

26. This shews that the preceding prophecy had been communicated in a vision.

29. According to the tenor of the law of Moses, God would visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, tho' not to more than to the third and fourth generation; and this might mean no more than that the natural consequence of the vices of parents would, in the course of his providence, affect their posterity to a certain distance. But the new constitution under which they would be placed after their return, would be more favourable than this, as then no person would suffer for the sins of any ancestor, but only for his own. Or the meaning may be, that whereas the Hebrew nation, in its present dispersion, suffers in part in consequence of the idolatry of their remote ancestors, this will be fully expiated, and they will never be brought into the same circumstances any more.

33. The former covenant failed because it was broken on the part of the people; but hereafter it would be so ordered, in the course of divine providence, that the new covenant would not be broken by that means, or any other; as the nation would be all, or generally, virtuous, and the divine favour would by that means be secured to them. It might be called a *new covenant*,
tho'

tho' it was only the old covenant renewed, and better secured from violation.

38. The rebuilding of the city has not yet taken place, for it never has been of so great extent as is here described. Besides that after this it is never to be destroyed any more.

39. Both the hill Gareb, which was to, the North, and Goath, supposed to be the same with *Golgotha*, or the hill of Gotha, were without the bounds of the city. The tower of Hanameel is supposed to have been near the temple. But according to the map of Jerusalem in the Universal History, the ancient wall did extend from that place to the corner gate, which was in the northern extremity of the city. The meaning of the prophecy certainly is, that the city will hereafter be greatly enlarged in several directions, and that it will so continue till the end of time.

Ch. XXXII. This chapter contains history as well as prophecy. It foretells the certain taking of the city by the Chaldeans, and the restoration of the nation in future time, and that a time not yet come.

9. The sum here mentioned, amounting to no more than about forty shillings sterling, seems very small for the purchase of a field. But the size of the field is not mentioned, and it was then in the hands of the enemy, and according to the predictions of Jeremiah would continue in the same state seventy years ; so that its value could not have been great. The prophet only bought it by divine direction, as a token, that notwithstanding the unpromising aspect of things at that time, the coun-

try would hereafter be settled in a regular manner, when purchases would be made as before.

11. What is meant by the *sealed* part of the writing, and what by the *open* part is uncertain. But it is said that when a contract was made, the notary kept one copy of it sealed, but delivered another open to the purchaser.

18—*Is thy name. MSS.*

Ch. XXXIII. This prophecy relates wholly to the future happy state of the Hebrew nation, when they will all be restored to the divine favour, and a prince of the house of David will reign over them. A promise is also made to the Levites, that their tribe shall never fail, but that they shall resume their offices, in offering sacrifices, &c. to the end of time.

2. *The Lord who made the earth. LXX.*

11. This is an allusion to the cxxxvi Psalm, the burden of which is, *For his mercy endureth forever.* It seems to have been sung on all occasions of joy, and to have been a favourite composition with the nation.

13. They were told, or numbered, in order to be taxed.

15. This is a repetition of the promise in favour of the posterity of David, and in the very words used by Isaiah.

16. *Israel shall dwell safely. MSS. Ib.—He shall be called.*

This is repeated from Ch. xxiii, 6.

18. It is as evident that the temple service, in all its essential parts will be resumed after the restoration of the

the Jews, as that they will be restored to all. If the one be figurative, the other must be so too.

24. The *two families* here mentioned appear from v. 26 to be those of Jacob and David, the former respecting the nation in general, and the latter the royal family:

26. *I will not cast away:* Jerom and one MS. In others it is, *I will bring back the seed of Jacob.*

Ch. XXXIV. The seven first verses of this chapter contain a prophecy delivered to Zedekiah in person, announcing the certainty of his being carried to Babylon; but nothing is said of his eyes being put out. And had he surrendered himself, as directed by God and the prophet, this no doubt would not have been his fate. However, all that is here foretold, was literally fulfilled.

8. This is another prophecy delivered when the army of the Chaldeans had left the city to meet the Egyptians, who were coming to its relief. The people, depending upon their assistance, had violated the engagements they had solemnly entered into to observe the laws of Moses, especially respecting their brethren whom they had held in a state of servitude, which ought not to have extended beyond the year of Jubilee. These, after having dismissed them, they reclaimed, and reduced to their former state. For this they are here threatened with severe punishment on the return of the Chaldeans, of which they are apprized.

18. When a solemn covenant was entered into, the contracting parties killed a calf, and placing the parts at some distance from each other, walked between

them, to signify that they were willing to be cut asunder, like that calf, if they violated that agreement. This was practised by other ancient nations. The Divine Being himself in the symbol of a flame of fire, conformed to this rule in the covenant that he made with Abraham, Gen. xv, 9—18.

Ch. XXXV. From the obedience which the descendants of Jonadab the son of Rechab paid to his injunctions, the Divine Being upbraids the Israelites with their disobedience to him, promising favour to the Rechabites, and threatening the Israelites with the marks of his displeasure.

2. The Rechabites were Kenites, probably the descendants of Jethro the father in law of Moses, originally settled in that part of Arabia which is called the land of Midian. This Jonadab was probably the same that is mentioned as a person of considerable note in the reign of Jehu (2 Kings, x, 15) and whom he chose as a witness of his zeal in the cause of God against Baal. Jonadab evidently wished to preserve the ancient simplicity of manners among his descendants; and therefore directed them to live in moveable tents, as Abraham did, and many of the Arabs now do, with no other occupation than that of tending cattle.

5. This burning, Maimonides says, was not of the bodies, but of furniture and ornaments that belonged to the kings, mixed with spices to make a pleasing odour. *Spencer*, p. 1146.

Ch. XXXVI. This chapter contains an account of Jeremiah being directed to write his predictions in a book

book, to be read to all the people, and the consequence of reading it.

5. Why Jeremiah himself could not go to the temple and read his own book, does not appear. Perhaps, after narrowly escaping with life, he was sentenced not to declaim any more in public, or attend the temple service, where he would meet with a concourse of people.

6. This is not said to have been the annual fast on the day of atonement, but might have been appointed on account of the first taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans the year preceding this.

9. It was in the month of the preceding year that Nebuchadnezzar took the city.

10. He probably read from a balcony overlooking the great court of the temple, where the people could most conveniently attend in great numbers.

19. This arose, no doubt, from a friendly concern for his safety ; his friends being apprehensive of the violence of the king's temper, and the offence that he would take at the contents of the book.

22. The fire was probably in a moveable vessel, or brazier, there being no open chimnies like ours in any house in the East.

30. Tho' we have no account of this circumstance at the death of Jehoiakim, there is nothing in the history to contradict it. He was last king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, but when he rebelled, he might have been conquered, and taken, as was observed before, by the allies of the Chaldeans, and being killed, his body might have

have been exposed in the manner that is here described, and his son Jehoiakim made king in his stead.

Ch. XXXVII. In this chapter we have an account of the state of Jerusalem during the absence of the Chaldeans, while they raised the siege of Jerusalem in order to meet the Egyptians, and especially what befel Jeremiah himself in that interval.

12. After the Chaldeans had overrun all the country, Jeremiah who had property in Anathoth, was naturally desirous of examining into the state of what was left, and taking what belonged to him.

15. In the East the prisons were generally in some part of the house of the judge, which was set apart for that purpose.

16. This was probably a deep pit, sunk in the quadrangle of the house, with cells at the bottom for each prisoner. This would be the most effectual method to prevent escapes.

21. This was not the house of Jonathan the scribe, where was the dungeon, but the court of the prison, in the king's house, mentioned Ch. xxxvi, 7.

Ch. XXXVIII. In this chapter we have an account of the sufferings of Jeremiah in consequence of the prophecies which he delivered, and of the interview which he had with king Zedekiah on the occasion.

5. This king, like many others, was not able to overrule the resolutions of persons in power under him.

6. If the prison was a pit in the court of a house, it might easily have water in it, and be in the condition that is here represented.

7. Courts of judicature were held near the gates of cities

cities, and the king was probably attending there for the purpose of administering justice.

9. That is, he would be neglected and deprived of his allowance in the general calamity.

14. There was a magnificent gallery by which the king went from his palace to the temple. In some part of this it is probable was the place fixed upon for the interview, and within the precincts of the temple where there would be less suspicion of a preconcerted meeting. It is evident that the king had a respect for Jeremiah, and would probably have been governed by him if he had followed the dictates of his own mind.

22. By staying he would expose himself to greater insults, the thing which he most of all dreaded, than by leaving the place.

Ch. XXXIX. This chapter contains an account of the taking of the city, and the immediate consequence of it to the king and to the prophet.

2.—*In the fifth month.* Some MSS.

3 It is thought that the words *Samgar*, *Rabsaris*, and *Rabmag*, were the names of offices, and therefore that there are only three persons mentioned here. *Rabmag* may mean the chief of the Magi.

4. The Chaldeans probably entered the city on the north side, and then took possession of the central parts of it, while the king and the princes fled out at the opposite gate.

5. He would be tried as a rebel to the prince to whom he had sworn allegiance.

7. There was peculiar cruelty in this punishment, first putting his children to death, and then putting out his

his eyes, that the last thing he saw might be the most afflictive possible. Notwithstanding this, the former prophecy of Jeremiah, concerning the circumstances of his death and funeral, might be true. He was carried to Babylon, and might be buried with the usual ceremonies and lamentations.

11. The prophecies of Jeremiah, and his general character and conduct, having been well known to his countrymen, no doubt were so to the Chaldeans; and as he had foretold the issue of the siege, and had advised the surrender of the city, he would naturally be favoured by them. His other prophecies concerning the future punishment of Babylon might be less known, or noticed.

15. This prophecy must have been delivered some time before the taking of the city. It appears that there were pious persons, even in the courts of these princes, in the worst of times. Being a Cushite he was black; and eunuchs are at this day employed in considerable offices in the courts of Eastern princes, especially in having the guard of women.

Ch. XL. This chapter and the four following ones, contain an account of what passed in Palestine after the taking of Jerusalem till the retreat of the people into Egypt, and the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning them.

2. It was a common opinion in the heathen world, that the gods of particular countries were to be worshipped in those countries, and that they would punish those of the inhabitants who neglected their rites:

This

This acknowledgment, therefore, does not imply a renunciation of idolatry.

5. With a little alteration of the Hebrew text this will be, *But if thou wilt not turn to me, turn to Gedaliah.* Betake thyself to him, which makes a much better sense than the present reading.

6. Mizpah was in mount Ephraim, about half way between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean sea, so that its situation was sufficiently central.

Ch. XLI. This Ishmael, being of the royal family, might think that he ought to have been appointed governor of the country in preference to Gedaliah.

5. It is evident from this, that tho' the temple was destroyed, the worship was in some degree resumed. They had probably erected the altar of burnt offering, as they did after the return from Babylon, and sacrificed on it, before the temple was rebuilt.

Persons cutting themselves was always considered as a mark of great affection, as well as of deep sorrow.

9. This pit was perhaps a reservoir for rain water, to serve the citizens in case of a siege, made when Asa fortified Mizpah in his war with Baasha king of Israel. 1 Kings xv, 22.

18. There does not seem to have been any sufficient reason for this apprehension, since Gedaliah, had not been killed by them. But they might dread another visit from the Chaldeans on the account of it, and think that little distinction might be made between the innocent and the guilty.

Ch. XLII. 10. This language, implying human affections in the Divine Being, is common in the scriptures

tures. Thus it is said Gen. vi, 6. that *God repented that he had made man*, when their wickedness was very flagrant, before the flood. But this language is not more difficult to account for than the ascription of hands and feet to the Divine Being. It is only speaking to men as men, who had no ideas but of beings like themselves. It means no more than that he would not punish them any more, but change his conduct with respect to them.

20. He knew, either by his own observation of their conduct, or by revelation, that they were bent upon going to Egypt, what word soever he might bring them from God.

Ch. XLIII. 2. The people had often been imposed upon by persons pretending to prophecy, but the predictions of Jeremiah had been so often verified in recent events, that nothing but the most unreasonable prejudice, and a determination to follow their own inclination, can account for their conduct. For they did not question the power of Jehovah, or their obligation to obey him and his prophets. However, we see instances of as great inconsistency every day, in persons who have no doubt of the truth of revelation, and yet persist in a course of conduct which they will acknowledge to be exceedingly wrong and hazardous.

7. That is to Daphnæ Pelusiace, or Pelusium, the first city in Egypt next to Palestine.

10. In the prophecies of Ezekiel, Nebuchadnezzar is promised the spoils of Egypt as a reward for his trouble in taking Tyre ; being considered as the servant of God

God, executing his commissions, in like manner as in this place.

12. Whatever is done according to the will of God, and in the course of his common providence, is represented in the scriptures as done by himself. Nebuchadnezzar is here described taking the spoils of Egypt at his leisure, and with the greatest ease, as a shepherd puts on his clothes.

13. The *house of the sun*, probably means the city of Heliopolis, or On, a city dedicated to the worship of the Sun. Nebuchadnezzar treated the temples of Egypt as he had done that at Jerusalem, with a view perhaps to shew the superiority of his god to those of other nations. Xerxes spared no temple or image in Greece, because the Persians had none, and reprobated the use of them. But the Chaldeans had temples and idols; so that the same excuse cannot be made for them.

Ch. XLIII. This chapter contains a more explicit prediction of the calamities which the Jews who fled into Egypt would meet with there, and an account of what passed between Jeremiah and them on that occasion.

12. *And he will kindle a fire. A. V.*

13. *And he shall break in pieces the images of the house of the sun. M. Bl.*

Ch. XLIV. 1. The places here mentioned are in the order of their distance from Palestine, Migdol was Magdolus of the Greeks; Tahpanhes, Daphnæ Pelusiæ, or Pelusium; Noph, Memphis; and Pathos, Thebais.

14. *As*

14. As some were to escape, they were probably those who had resided some time before in Egypt, and not those who went thither in direct opposition to the command of God by the prophet. For of these it was expressly said that none of them would escape.

18. There must have been some colour of pretence for this strange perverseness. They had, no doubt, practised idolatrous rites long before the destruction of the city, and in part of that time had enjoyed much prosperity; and this they were willing to ascribe to the favour of the foreign deities notwithstanding the positive prediction of ruin to their city and country on that account; a prediction which they saw to be accomplished. But they might not think there was any proper connection between the prediction and the event, from their bias in favour of their idolatrous practices. It is not, as we see, the experience of years and generations that will convince many persons of the folly of many superstitious practices in common life. Having been taught by their parents, that there is a connection between certain practices, and certain events, they still believe it; attributing all the correspondences to the operation of the proper cause, and the failures, be they ever so numerous, to something that interfered to prevent its operation.

19. They had the leave of their husbands for the performance of these idolatrous rites, so that there could be no reasonable suspicion of any thing improper being done on the occasion.

The vows of women had no effect if they were not confirmed by the nearest male relation, Num. xxx, 1, 16.

It appears on several occasions that the women were most actively employed in the worship of Astarte, or Astarte, a female deity, probably the moon ; sometimes called the queen of heaven.

30. As the people were, at least, in doubt whether the calamities which had befallen them were in consequence of their idolatrous practices, or their neglect of them, the prophet puts the question on a fair issue, which was, that the king of Egypt, Pharaoh Hophra, called by the Greeks *Apries* would fall before the king of Babylon, who was probably at that time on his march into Egypt. After this there remained no reasonable doubt of Jehovah having caused their calamity on account of their neglect of his worship, and the warnings of his prophets. And reflections on the events of this period, produced such an abiding conviction of the folly of idolatry, that all the Jews from that time entertained the greatest contempt and dread of it, so that there is no danger of their ever relapsing into it again, prone as they formerly were to it.

Ch. XLV. This chapter contains a particular prediction in favour of Baruck, who had twice written the prophecies of Jeremiah in a book. It is much out of its proper place in chronological order, and should be added to Ch. 36.

5. In a time of such general calamity, all that any person could reasonably expect was personal safety; and he was taught not to look for any thing more. His life was given him as a *spoil*, or an unexpected advantage.

VOL II.

Ch.

Ch. XLVI. All the more considerable of the Hebrew prophets foretold the fate not of their country only, but that of most of the neighbouring nations ; and by this means, among others, the Divine Being asserted his sovereignty over all the world. In this place all the prophecies of Jeremiah respecting foreign nations are put together, without any regard to the order of the time in which they were delivered. Notes, however, are added to some of them, by which the dates of others may be ascertained ; as it is probable they were all delivered about the same time.

The two great rival powers in the latter times of the kings of Judah and Israel, were the Egyptians on the one hand, and the Assyrians or Chaldeans on the other. When the Israelites and other neighbouring nations apprehended danger from one of them, they courted the assistance of the other ; and as they were comparatively weak, they were all in a kind of subjection to them in their turns. From a little before the beginning of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the Egyptians and Chaldeans were in a state of open war, and before the delivery of the following prophecy which reaches to the 13th verse, the Egyptians had marched as far as the Euphrates in their way to Babylon ; and their total defeat is here foretold in highly figurative language, as the description of an event that had already taken place.

4. These verses contain a description of the great preparations made by the Egyptians for the war.

6. This defeat, which excited much surprize, is accounted

counted for from the terror with which God inspired them.

8. The pride and haughtiness of the Egyptians is compared to the swelling of a great river, and with peculiar propriety, as all the fertility of Egypt is owing to the Nile.

9. Here the king of Egypt is represented animating his army, and addressing himself to the different nations of which it was composed. Cush and Phut were two sons of Ham, and brothers of Misraim, and their descendants were probably settled in the neighbourhood of Egypt, which was peopled by Misraim. The Cushites settled on both sides of the Red sea, to the south of Egypt. The descendants of Phut were to the west of it, probably the Lybians. Who the Ludim were is uncertain. Bochart makes them to be Ethiopians who were expert in the use of the bow.

11. Gilead was famous for its balsam, which was used as medicine; and the prophet ironically bids the Egyptians go thither for the healing of their wounds.

13. This prophecy relates, no doubt, to the same desolation of Egypt, which was foretold by Ezekiel, Ch. xxix—xxxii, and which commenced sixteen years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and after the siege of Tyre, which lasted thirteen years.

15. It is with great probability conjectured that the true reading, and which is authorized by the Seventy, would be *Why is Apis thy calf fled*, alluding to an Egyptian deity of that name, which was worshipped in the form of a living ox.

17. The allies of the Egyptians did not come to their assistance.

18. Tabor and Carmel were the most considerable mountains in Palestine, and to them Nebuchadnezzar is here compared.

19. Noph, or Memphis, was the capital of Egypt.

20. As the Egyptians worshipped a bull, and a cow was sacred to Isis, a female deity of that country, there may be an allusion to it in this place.

21. Tho' they were fed, and paid, they did him no service.

22. They shall speak with a low voice, as that of necromancers, whose voice was made to appear to come from some place under ground. This the Egyptians did through fear.

25. *Behold I will visit upon Ammon of No. MS. B/.*

No was Thebes, and Ammon was an Egyptian deity worshipped there. Hence this city was called Diospolis by the Greeks.

Thebes was built by a colony of Ethiopians from Sire, the city of Seir, or the dog star. The Greeks putting *O* before it, made it *Ofris*, which was not the sun, but the dog star, because of the warning it gave of the increase of the river to Atbara, where the first observations of its heliacal rising were made. It was the *Latrator Anubis*. *Bruce's Travels*, p. 412.

26. According to the prophecy of Ezekiel, Egypt was to recover itself after forty years.

27. 28. These verses are repeated from Ch. **xix**, 10, 11.

C L

Ch. XLVII. This chapter contains a prophecy concerning the fate of the Philistines, who were probably conquered by Nebuchadnezzar during the siege of Tyre, in order to cut off all the assistance which the Tyrians might receive from those parts. Gaza was probably taken in the fourth year of Zedekiah, when the kings of all the neighbouring nations sent ambassadors to engage him in a confederacy into which they had entered to oppose the Chaldeans. In this they would naturally depend upon the king of Egypt, and Gaza, being near Egypt, would be of particular consequence in the war. This prophecy, however, of the conquest of the Philistines announces their subjugation from the North, or by the Chaldeans.

3. Being intimidated at such a formidable invasion.

4. The Caphtorim, as well as the Philistines, were descended from Misraim, the father of the Egyptians, from whatever place they came, which with much probability is thought to have been from Crete. They expelled the Avims from the court of Palestine, contiguous to Gaza, and settled there Deut. ii 23; and on this account those parts were afterwards called the country of Caphtor:

5. Pulling off the hair, and also silence, were equally marks of sorrow. The valley in which these towns stood was particularly fertile and delightful.

5. 6. With the LXX, and the Vulgate these two verses may be joined, and rendered, *How long will thou continue to cut, or destroy. O sword of Jehovah.*

7. As

7. As the King of Assyria was by Isaiah called the *staff in the hand of God*, so the Chaldeans are here called *his sword*, being employed by him to execute his designs.

Ch. XLVIII. This chapter contains a very poetical description of the desolation of Moab, which was accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar during his thirteen years siege of Tyre. Many parts of this prophecy seem to have been borrowed from a similar prophecy of Isaiah concerning the same country, Ch. xv and xvi. By comparing the parallel passages much light may be thrown upon them both, tho' much obscurity will still remain, for want of our being sufficiently acquainted with the geography and history of that country.

2. On the mention of the name of a place, the prophet often introduces a word of a similar sound, and sometimes of a similar meaning, which was considered as a beauty in composition; and it would at the same time help the memory in the recollection of it. This was the case with the word *Heshbon*, as the word which we render *devised* has several of the same letters. *Madman* also resembles a word which signifies *speechless*.

4. That is, those who remained after the great slaughter of their countrymen.

5. At Luhith the hilly part of the country began, and at Horonaim was the descent into the plain on the opposite side.

Mine enemies. The Divine Being is the speaker here.

7. Chemosh was the principal deity of the Moabites. It signifies the sun.

11 It

11. It is said to be an advantage to wine to remain long upon its lees, preserving its strength and flavour. In order to clear it they pour it into other vessels. Chardin says that this is frequently done in the East, especially as the large jars must be emptied into a number of small ones:

13. One of the calves that were worshipped by the ten tribes was at Bethel.

28. That is, in places where the enemy would not chuse to come; a place of danger.

32. Perhaps the vines of Sibmah were cultivated from that place to the extremity of the country, as far as the Red sea, and not, as has been thought, that the wine was sent to distant countries.

34. This is a very poetical representation of the cities of Moab, lamenting with one another on their desolate condition.

36. What they saved from one devastation would be destroyed in another.

40. The enemy shall come like an eagle, hovering in the air, and ready to dart upon his prey.

44. See the Note on Is. xxiv, 17, 18.

45. These verses are taken from the prophecy of Balaam, Numb. xxi, 28, 29, but with some variation, whether by accident or design, is uncertain. They who fled might perhaps make a stand at Heshbon, and be defeated a second time.

47. What is meant by *bringing again the captivity of Moab*, is very uncertain. Other prophecies say that the country of the Moabites, as well as of the Edomites and Ammonites, shall be peopled by the Israelites after

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their restoration. Perhaps some of the antient inhabitants, and known to be such, tho' now mixed with the Arabs, will settle with them; as people of many other nations are said to unite with them at that time, so that the country may become as populous and flourishing as ever it had been.

Ch. XLIX. 1. Why hath Milcom taken possession of Gad. MS. Bl. Milcom, or Moloch, was the God of the Ammonites.

The downfall of the Ammonites foretold by Ezeiel Ch. xxv, 2,—7. Amos i. 13.—15, and Zephaniah ii. 8.—11. It was probably completed at the same time with the preceding concerning Moab, and the other neighbouring nations. When the kings of Assyria conquered the ten tribes, and carried them into captivity, it is probable that the Ammonites took possession of the country that had belonged to the Gadites, as being contiguous to them. In early times it had been theirs, but they had been dispossessed by the Amorites, who were extirpated in the time of Moses.

2. This was in some measure fulfilled when Judas Maccabeus defeated the Ammonites, and took their towns; but it may refer to a time time that is yet future, when the Israelites, returning from their great dispersion, will occupy that country as well as others in their neighbourhood.

3. For Milcom shall go into captivity. MS. Bl.

Grotius finds a place called *Gaia* in this country, mentioned by Ptolemy.

6. This must be interpreted in the same manner as the similar prediction concerning Moab.

7 The

7. The destruction of Idumea was foretold by Ezekiel, Ch. xxv, 12.—14, xxxv, 2, &c. by Joel iii, 19, Amos i, 11—12, and by Obadiah. It was accomplished at the same time with that concerning Moab and Ammon.

8. That is, retire into your caverns, in which persons persecuted often took refuge. When a tribe of Arabs are apprehensive of danger, they will very suddenly remove to a great distance in the desert; where it is not easy to overtake, or even to find them.

9. I prefer the common version. The gatherers of grapes, especially by night, would leave many; and thieves coming at the same time would not carry away every thing. But of what belonged to the Edomites nothing would be left.

12. That is, the Israelites were deserving of less punishment than the Edomites. Or the meaning may only be, that they were the more favoured nation, tho' alike descended from Abraham and Isaac.

16. Idumea was a very hilly country, and the principal towns were situated on rocks. In such places eagles had their nests; but even this seemingly safe situation would not secure them from the pursuit of God.

19. When the river Jordan overflows its bounds, which it was apt to do very suddenly, the wild beasts that sheltered in the thickets adjoining to it would be dislodged, and roam about the country. The person commissioned by God to execute his judgments was Nebuchadnezzar.

28. With

23. With a little alteration of the text this will be *restless as the sea*, which makes a better sense.

Isaiah had delivered a prophecy against Damascus Ch. 17, which had been fulfilled by Tiglathpileser taking it, and carrying the inhabitants to Kir, 2 Kings xvi, 9. Amos had foretold the same event. But this city had recovered itself after the fall of the Assyrian empire, and it is here sentenced to as severe a fate from the Chaldeans; and this was probably fulfilled about the same time with that of the neighbouring nations.

Hamath was once the capital of an independent kingdom, situated near the northern frontier of the land of Israel, whence we often read of *the entrance of Hamath*. By the Macedonians it was called Epiphania. Arphad, or Arvad, is thought to be the island of Acardus in the Mediterranean.

27. Benhadad seems to have been a common name for the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh was for those of Egypt.

28. Kedar was one of the sons of Ishmael who settled in Arabia; and among the sons of Joktan was Tizermaveth, Gen. xvi, 26—30. They were all settled in Arabia, but in what part is not known.

29. All the property of these Arabs consisted in tents, furniture, and cattle, which are moved from place to place, as is found convenient.

34. Elam was a powerful kingdom in very early times. It was part of Persia, called Elymais by the Greek writers.

35. Isaiah speaks of the Edomites as excelling in archery

archery, Ch. xxii, 6. *Elam bore the quiver*. Heathen writers speak of them in the same light.

38. This can only mean that Nebuchadnezzar, acting by commission from God, may be said to represent him; and his conquering Elam may be called his fixing his throne here.

39. Cyrus, after the conquest of Babylon, fixed his palace at Shushan, the capital of Elam; and for a long time it continued to be the seat of a great empire. This cannot well be the same period that is referred to when future prosperity is promised to Moab, and yet the phrase in the Hebrew is the very same. That concerning Ammon is a little different.

Ch. L. This prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon was delivered in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah as appears from Ch. LI, 59. It is intermixed with promises of favour to the Israelites, who were carried captive thither.

5. This certainly respects the final return of the Israelites. The *everlasting covenant*, is sometimes called the *new covenant* that God will make with them; when, as Ezekiel says, they will have a *new heart given unto them*, so that they will ever after be obedient to God, and have no more reverses of fortune, which has not yet taken place.

6. Idolatrous practices were chiefly committed on hills, and high places, as they principally respected the heavenly bodies.

11. The ox, or heifer, that treaded out the corn; was not to be muzzled, and therefore could eat and get fat.

12. It will be better rendered, *Behold she shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness, and dryland, and a desert.* Babylon was at that time the metropolis of the first of nations.

20. This undoubtedly refers to the final state of the Israelites, when their virtue, as well as their happiness will be confirmed.

21. Babylon might be called *a land of bitterness*, because it had proved so to the Jews; being the cause of much affliction to them.

36. Imposture means astrology, the object of which was the foretelling future events, for which the Chaldeans were famous.

38. This may allude to the diverting of the course of the river by Cyrus when he took Babylon.

Ch. LL. 1. The LXX has *against Babylon and against the Chaldeans*. The Hebrew word, which now occupies the place of *Chaldeans*, may, it is said, by a Jewish ænigmatical way of writing, express the same thing. But I see no reason why the Jews should make such an alteration of the text in this place.

10. The LXX and Arabic have *his righteousness*, viz. that of God, which makes a better sense.

11. There could not have been any prospect at this time that the Medes would overthrow the Babylonish empire; and yet this event was foretold by Isaiah long before this time.

13. That is, a slave to his avarice and ambition.

15.—19. These verses are copied from Ch. x, 12,—16.

20 Nations

20. Nations are represented as instruments in the hand of God, to effect his purposes.

25. A prince, or a great nation, may be denominated by a mountain.

27. Ararat and Minni are probably the greater and less Armenia, and Ashkenaz was part of Phrygia near the Hellespont. The people of these countries composed part of the army of Cyrus when he marched against Babylon.

31. Herodotus says the city was so large that the inhabitants of some part of it were a considerable time ignorant of its being taken.

32. These were probably passages from the streets to the river, which Herodotus says were left unguarded at the festival in which the city was taken.

39. This may allude to the festival in which they were eating and drinking when the city was taken.

41. Sheshach must mean Babylon, tho' it is not known why it was so called.

42. By the *sea* must be understood numerous armies.

44. In this there is an allusion to the sacred vessels which were taken from the temple at Jerusalem.

46. History says that there were civil wars in the country after the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

48. The Medes were the ruling nation when Babylon was taken, and Media lay to the North of the city. Cyrus was general of the Medes, and according to Daniel, did not reign till after the death of Darius the Mede.

53. Herodotus says that the walls of Babylon were two hundred cubits high, and fifty broad.

55. Silence in a city is a sign of depopulation.

58 It

58. It is even uncertain where ancient Babylon stood, so little of it now remains.

59. This was when Zedekiah sent his annual tribute to the king of Babylon, to whom he was at that time subject.

64. This was a very expressive emblem of the destruction of the city, and could not fail to make the prediction to be remembered, and attended to.

Ch. LII. This chapter was, no doubt, written by some other person than Jeremiah, probably by Ezra, when he collected and arranged the books of scripture. The great number of particular circumstances mentioned in it, are evident marks of its having been written near the time of the events, or by some person who was possessed of authentic documents concerning them.

12. In 2 Kings xxv, 8. it is the seventh day of the month.

20. Ahaz had removed the ten lavers from their bases, and had perhaps converted them to some other use, 2 Kings, xvi, 17, for there is no mention here of the lavers, but only of their bases.

21. In 2 Chron. iii, 15, it is said that Solomon made two pillars of thirty five cubits in length. This must, therefore, have been the length of them both, in the nearest whole number.

23. In 1 Kings, vii, 42, and 2 Chron. iv, 13, it is said that there were four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, or wreaths; two rows of pomegranates for each network, or wreath. But tho' the expression there be different from this, they amount to the same thing, as is explained by Mr. Blaney p. 300.

25 Five

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25. Five only are mentioned 2 Kings, xxv, 19, but the Arabic version has *seven* in both the places, and Josephus says there were seven.

28, 29, 30.—These could not be all that were carried to Babylon, and must probably relate to some cases not mentioned in other accounts.

31. In 2 kings, xxv, 27, it is the *twenty seventh*.

33. This was probably done by Jehoiakim himself, out of respect to the king of Babylon ; frequent changes of raiment being considered in the East as a compliment to the person visited.

NOTES ON THE

LAMENTATIONS OF

J E R E M I A H.

THIS book is a poetical or regular composition of Jeremiah, lamenting the state of his country after the conquest of it by the Chaldeans. But all that can be perceived of regular composition, is that different verses, or part of verses, begin with particular letters in the order of the alphabet. Sometimes two or three sentences beginning with the same letter are placed together, and sometimes the initial letter is changed
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in every sentence. Tho' the prophet laments the desolate state of his country, he acknowledges the justice of God in it, as it was the consequence of their many provocations. Sometimes the prophet is the speaker, and sometimes the people, or the country, as will easily be perceived.

Ch. I. 2. The neighbouring nations were engaged in the opposition to the Chaldeans jointly with the people of Judah; but when the latter were attacked none of their allies came to their assistance, but rather aggravated and rejoiced in their misfortunes.

3. That is, in a place where she cannot avoid them. It may allude to the custom of drawing wild beasts into an inclosure, in a narrow part of which they are easily taken.

9. Tho' she bear evident marks of pollution, she was not apprehensive of any ill consequence from it.

14. That they might not escape. The metaphor is taken from a fowler, who watches the motion of a bird, in order to entangle it in his net.

Being thrown down with a heavy yoke upon his neck, he could only support himself on his hands, but was not able to raise himself up.

15. The effusion of blood was so great as to resemble the flowing of the juice of grapes from a vat, in which they were pressed.

20: *Death*, in this place, must mean the pestilence.

21. Thou hast brought a season of adversity upon me, and will bring it upon them in their turn.

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Ch. II. 2. The footstool means the ark of the covenant, over which was the *mercy seat*, where was the symbol of the divine presence.

3. That is the right hand of Israel; so that he could not strike his enemy.

11. There is the same idea in the book of Job. Ch. xvi, 13, he poureth out my gall upon the ground. All the entrails are supposed to be affected in a state of extreme grief, but these effects are said to be more observable in the Eastern countries, where the human frame is more acutely sensible, than with us. Hence the expression of *the sounding of the bowels* or the effects of compassion, the idea of which would never have occurred to an European.

16. 17. In these verses the alphabetical order of the initial letter is inverted, probably through the carelessness of the transcriber. For in the Syriac version the order is regular, and it is of no consequence with respect to the scenes, which of them be placed first.

18. *The daughter of the eye* may mean a tear,

Ch. III. 3. Sitting implies continuance in doing a thing.

14. *To all nations*, MSS.

16. By rolling in ashes, earth or ashes would get into a person's mouth.

21. Till this verse we have had nothing but the language of complaint. Here the writer suggests the strongest reasons for hope, and expresses the greatest confidence in the justness and goodness of God.

36. That is, he does not approve. So we read Heb. i, 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.*

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The word *know* is frequently used in the same sense, Ps. i, 6. *The Lord knoweth the way of the upright.*

37. Whatever is foretold, and really comes to pass, must have been foreseen and directed by God. This was the case with respect to the sufferings of the Israelites.

39. While a man lives he enjoys many blessings, and all that he can suffer is no more than he deserves.

43. This seems to be an allusion to the method of hunting wild beasts, by enclosing a large tract of country, and driving many of them into a narrow compass.

46, 47, 48. According to the order of the alphabet, which is generally observed in this book, these verses should follow 49, 50, 51 ; and they are so disposed in the Syriac version.

51. Perhaps lesser towns, depending on the metropolis.

Ch. IV. 5. They sheltered themselves in a place where dry dung was kept for fuel.

6. Sodom was destroyed suddenly, but Jerusalem suffered more because her calamity came on gradually.

9. They die before there is any failure of sustenance, and thus do not experience the distress of famine.

14. If they did them no other injury, they desiled them by touching them.

15. They misbehaved not only at home, but even in a state of captivity, which brought farther ill treatment upon them.

20. This means king Zedekiah.

21 This

21. This is an ironical mode of address, intimating that they had no cause of joy, as their punishment was approaching.

Ch. V. 4. After the return from Babylon it appears from Neh. ii. 8, that timber was not cut without leave, whereas before it is thought that certain forests were open to all persons.

6. They submitted to the Egyptians and Assyrians in consequence of their distresses.

9. They were exposed to the incursions of the Arabs.

12. That is, by the hand of their enemies.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

E Z E K I E L.

EZEKIEL was a priest carried captive in the reign of Jehoiakim, and from this captivity his prophecies are dated. He, together with many others, was settled at Tel-abib, or some other place on the river Chebar, the Chaboras of the Greeks, which runs into the Euphrates on the east side at Carchemish (Circesum) near two hundred miles north of Babylon. Near this river was the scene of Ezekiel's prophecies, which continued through a course of twenty two years. Tho'

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he was cotemporary with Jeremiah who was in the land of Judah, and with Daniel who lived in Babylon, he does not appear to have had any communication with either of them. The latter, however, is mentioned by him (or rather by the Divine Being) in his writings, with extraordinary respect.

Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel expostulates with his countrymen on their idolatry and vices, and he predicts the fate of the neighbouring nations, and the prosperous state of his own, with a more circumstantial account of their final settlement in their country, than any of the preceding prophets.

Ch. I. 1. This thirtieth year was perhaps that of the prophet's own age. The paraphrase of Jonathan makes it to be thirty years from the finding of the book of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah. But though there was this space of time between that event and the fifth of the captivity in the reign of Jehoiakim, it does not appear to have been an epoch from which any events were dated. Scaliger supposes it to be the year of the reign of Nabopolassar the father of Nebuchadnezzar. But neither does this appear to have been an epocha referred to on any other occasion.

2.—*When they stood and let down their wings,* is wanting in the LXX and in several MSS.

4. A luminous cloud was the usual symbol of the divine presence; and in general it was not accompanied by any other appearance. But here it has many accompaniments, seemingly that of a chariot, or throne, under which were wheels, and Cherubims; and on the throne

throne was a human form, resembling the appearance of the *Antient of Days*, or the Supreme Being, in the visions of Daniel.

6. 10. The word rendered *faces* may signify *forms*, or *likenesses in general*, and some suppose that the Cherubims had not the faces of the four animals, but the head of a man, the shoulder and mane of the lion, the wings of the eagle, and the body and legs of an ox. *Spencer*, p. 865.

11. Cherubims were emblematical figures, and not the likeness of any thing that really existed, but always compounded of several creatures ; but what was signified by them is very uncertain. The Cherubims in the books of Moses had each two wings, those of Isaiah, called Seraphim, had six, and these had four. Another circumstance peculiar, as far as we know, to these, was their having feet resembling those of a calf. They had also human hands under their wings. All the animals which they resembled are such as are generally considered as the perfect; having some distinguishing excellence, as the lion denoting courage, the bull strength, the eagle swiftness, and the man intelligence. In the Revelation the *four living creatures*, which seem to be of the same nature with these, represent the church of Christ in a state of glory ; but here they do not seem to have any such meaning ; but to have an office similar to that of angels.

12. In the opening of this vision the prophet saw a *stormy wind* coming from the north, and this magnificent appearance accompanied that wind, and it is the

same word that is here rendered *spirit*. It must therefore, signify that these cherubims accompanied that wind wherever it went.

13. The LXX makes a better sense than the Hebrew of this verse. *And among the living creatures there was an appearance like burning coals of fire. It went up and down among the living creatures.*

14. Besides the refulgent appearance of these cherubims, flashes of fire were seen darting among them.

20 — *Thither was their spirit to go*, is wanting in several MSS. and the LXX.

These wheels are not so clearly described as to give us a distinct idea of their position or use, but they seem to have accompanied a chariot, supporting a throne.

21. Or, according to the Seventy, a living spirit was in the whole. They appeared to be animated, and accordingly they were full of eyes.

22. By an easy transposition it will be, as the *colour of transparent crystal*, which is more probably the meaning.

This firmament must have been the body of a chariot, which supported the throne, and it was transparent like ice. Notwithstanding the caution so expressly given by Moses to make no representation of God, and it was observed to them that they saw no appearance of any thing on mount Sinai, but only heard a voice; yet in prophetic visions this appearance of a human form was several times exhibited, and to Abraham it was something more than a vision. Yet these representations did not lead those who saw them to suppose

pose that the Supreme Being had any proper form, or that he was confined to any particular place. For whatever purpose was answered by these temporary appearances, he is also represented as omnipresent, and omniscient, filling heaven and earth. These splendid appearances, whatever was their particular form, were calculated to impress the mind with sentiments of awe and reverence. Of all the prophets, however, only Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, had this appearance exhibited to them.

Jerom thought that by the word here and Ch. viii, 2. rendered *amber* some precious metal was meant.

23.—*every one had two which covered on this side*, is wanting in several MSS. and the LXX.

25.—*when they stood and let down their wings*, is wanting in several MSS. and the LXX.

Ch. II. 1. The prophet, awed by the refulgent appearances described above, had naturally prostrated himself on the ground.

The phrase son of man, which is generally synonymous to *man*, as in Ps. viii, 4. *What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him*, is not usually applied to any of the prophets except to Ezekiel and Daniel, both of whom resided in Chaldea; and it is thought to be an imitation of the phraseology of that country.

3. The charge here given to Ezekiel very much resembles that given to Jeremiah. Indeed the circumstances of these two prophets were in a great measure the same, the Jews in Palestine and those who had been carried captive being at that time of the same disposition

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tion. The effect of this captivity did not appear immediately, tho' it was sufficiently remarkable afterwards, curing them of every propensity to idolatry.

6. By *scorpion* is to be understood a kind of *thorn*, whose prickles are of a venomous nature, called by the Arabs *scorpion thorns*.

9. All this, it is to be observed, passed in vision. The appearance of this hand come, no doubt, from the Supreme Being.

10. The antient books were rolled up on cylinders of wood or ivory, and generally written on one side only.

Ch. III. 3. The image of eating a book is not a very natural one. It implies, however; the prophets receiving, and as it were digesting, the contents of it. The pleasure he at first received from it must have arisen from the honourableness of his mission, and not from the subject of it; for he was apprized that the contents of the book would be the occasion of grief to him.

9. This encouragement is similar to that which was given to Jeremiah.

14. He went in bitterness from considering the unpleasant message he had to deliver, and the disagreeable circumstances into which it would probably bring him.

15. Tho' residing near the same river, he must at this time have been at some distance from the place where he now dwelt.

16. He was silent, having received no particular commission, but uneasy under the expectation of it, from knowing its general nature.

20 All

20. All events are in a certain sense justly ascribed to God, even those by which men's hearts are hardened, and they suffer in consequence of it. Thus God is said to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and even to have raised him up for the important design of his providence, such a character as his being wanted for the purpose. But this does not at all lessen the guilt of persons who are actuated by bad motives, and who are therefore the proper subjects of punishment.

24. This might be to represent Jerusalem shut up by the siege.

25. He was to exhibit in his own person a picture of the future condition of his countrymen in order, no doubt, to draw the greater attention to it.

26. His being dumb was perhaps to signify that God would for a time withdraw his communications by the prophets.

Ch. IV. 3. This was to represent the state of Jerusalem, which was about to be besieged. The aptness of this emblem is not apparent, and if he was to observe this posture in sleeping only, it could not be known except from himself.

5. This number of years will extend from the siege of Jerusalem to the beginning of the reign of Jeroboam, when the worship of the golden calves commenced; and tho' the approaching calamity would more especially affect the tribe of Judah, yet, no doubt, many of the ten tribes, who had been permitted to remain in the country, and who appear to have been subject to the

the king of Judah, suffered the same fate with them in this captivity. It is computed that the siege of Jerusalem lasted about this number of natural days.

6. This is supposed to be reckoned from the eighteenth of Josiah, when the people, as it were, renewed their covenant with God, and engaged afresh to observe the laws of Moses. The uncertainty attending these computations is a pretty good proof that the book is no forgery. Had this been the case, no prophecy would have been unfulfilled, or liable to any material objection.

7. It was customary in mourning to lay the arms bare, and to beat them till they were black and blue.

9. The word here rendered *fitches* should have been *rice*. Bread made of *millet*, Niebuhr says he found so disagreeable, that he would have preferred plain barley bread to it.

12. This was to shew, that the people would be reduced to great straits, in consequence of which they would have but a scanty allowance of provisions.

15. Camel's dung is commonly used for fuel in the East. To shew the straits to which the inhabitants of Jerusalem would be reduced, the prophet was not only to eat a limited quantity of food, but to prepare it in the most disgusting manner.

Ch. V. By a striking emblem the Divine Being here announced the calamities and dispersion of the Hebrew nation in language very similar to that of Moses.

3. This represents the preservation of a few after the siege, but many of them were destroyed in consequence

quence of the conspiracy of Ishmael, and the flight into Egypt,

6. Other nations did not change the religion of their ancestors, but the Israelites had done so.

7.—*But have done according to the judgments of the nations.* MSS. K. This was the reading that Luther translated from.

12. We are not to suppose that the people would be exactly divided into these three parts ; but that they would suffer in these different ways.

15. Moses had said that they would be a *proverb* and a *bye word* in all nations ; and never was any prophecy more literally fulfilled than this, as we see at this day.

Ch. VI. This chapter contains a distinct prediction concerning the desolation of the kingdom of Judah, on account of the idolatry of the people, and of the preservation of some who would be reformed.

11.—*Therefore will I cut thee off.* MSS.

14. This was part of the desert mentioned in Num. xxxiii, 47, bordering on the country of Moab ; but it does not appear to have been more of a desert than many other places.

Ch. VII. This chapter contains nothing but a prediction of approaching calamity on account of the idolatry of the people.

10. The rod of oppression.

11. *Rather, violence is risen up against the rod of wickedness ;* meaning the punishment of the invading enemy.

12. The

12. The enemy would soon take what they had fold.

13. At the year of Jubilee the property they had fold reverted to the original owners, but this would not be the case now.

14. Through timidity, owing to the formidable appearance of the enemy.

16. Rather, *tho' any fugitives of them should escape, they shall be on the mountains like doves of the valley.*

17. Water in this place may signify *sweet*, implying great fatigue and weakness.

19. This money shall be of no use to them, because they had employed it to make and adorn their idols.

22. The Holy of holies in the temple.

23. An emblem of a state of bondage and captivity.

By the help of the LXX this may be rendered, *For the violent shall enter into it, and defile it, and they shall make it a pollution, or a vile thing.*

27. According to the LXX it is, *The hand of the people shall be enfeebled.*

Ch. VIII. This chapter, and the ninth, tenth and eleventh, contain an account of a vision which the prophet had as he was sitting in his own house, when the elders of the people were with him, when he was carried in spirit, that is appeared to be carried to Jerusalem, to have a view of the abominable idolatries that were committed in the temple itself. Some are of opinion that he had not this vision, or trance, while the elders were with him, but that he related to them what he had seen before. The trance, might not, however, be of any long continuance; and these elders, perceiving

ing that there was something extraordinary in the case, might wait till he was recovered from it.

2—*As the appearance of a man.* MSS. LXX. *It was downwards a man.* MSS.

This appearance was that of the Supreme Being. The colour of *amber* was something at the same time bright and transparent, like flame.

3. What this idol was does not appear. It is called the *idol of jealousy*, because it was set up in opposition to the true God, at which he is always represented as jealous, and he is therefore often stiled *a jealous God who will not give his glory to another.* As the worshippers are afterwards represented as bowing towards the East, the idol was probably Baal, or the sun, that was the object of worship.

5. Ahaz removed the brazen altar to the north side of the court, to make room for another which he set up after the pattern of one that he saw at Damascus. From this circumstance it is possible that the North Gate of the temple might come to be called *the gate of the altar.* Originally its place was directly in front of the temple.

7. The heathens frequently had places of worship in caverns, the insides of which were covered with figures adapted to it. There are many remains of such in the east.

10. These were the figures of such animals as were objects of worship in Egypt. They are called *abominable*, on account of the abominable use that was made of them. Diodorus Siculus says that round a room at Thebes in Egypt, where the body of king Osymanduas was buried, a multitude of chambers were built, which had

had elegant paintings of all the beasts that were held sacred in Egypt.

11. This was probably some prince, or one of the elders of the nation.

12 Many of the rites of the heathen worship were performed in dark subterraneous places, as the cave at Elephanta near Bombay,

12. Here is probably a reference to certain small images which the heathens made use of as tutelary gods for the preservation of their houses and goods. *Spencer*, p. 449.

14. This was *Adonis* of the Greeks. The festival began with the representation of a deep mourning, and ended with all kinds of riot and debauchery. The worshippers, after beating themselves and lamenting, performed the funeral obsequies of Adonis, as dead. Afterwards, pretending that he was alive, the women, it is said, who would not consent to be shaved, were obliged to prostitute themselves to strangers, and the money they received was consecrated to Venus. *Fragments*, Vol. IV. p. 186.

The Greeks also placed their dead near the doors of their houses, when they made lamentation for them.

15. The temple was built in such a manner that persons on entering it had their faces towards the West, which was contrary to the general situation of the heathen temples. In order therefore, to bow towards the East, in the worship of the sun, they must turn their backs to the temple.

17. The heathens, in the worship of their deities, held branches of the trees which were dedicated to them

them. But Bishop Newcome renders it, *They send forth a scornful noise through their nostrils:*

Ch. IX. This is a representation of the symbol of the divine presence coming out from the Holy of holies, and ordering the destruction of all idolaters in Jerusalem, but with an express direction to spare those who did not join them, but lamented the state of the country on that account.

4. Before the Hindoos enter their temples they are marked by the bramins upon their foreheads with marks of different colours, according to the deity to which the worship respects.

7. The heathens were so superstitious, that any criminal taking refuge in one of their temples was absolutely safe. He might be starved out, but the temple must not be violated. Here the Divine Being directs that no such regard be paid to his temple, when justice called for the death of a criminal. And, according to the laws of Moses, a man condemned to die, was to be taken even from the altar, and put to death. Here the temple itself, which had been polluted with idolatrous rites, was directed to be polluted with the blood of the idolaters.

Ch. X. 2. It does not appear where this fire and these coals were. In the vision of Isaiah coals were taken from the great altar, where a fire was always burning. Is. vi, 6.

3. This was the South side of the temple, facing the East. But if the language here used respected the man's entering, it may mean the North side.

4 That

4. That is, it had moved from the usual place of the Cherubim, in the Holy of holies, and was advanced to the entrance of the house, as if about to leave it.

12. This description is the same with that in the first chapter.

14. The wheels, as well as the Cherubim, were animated, and had eyes. This face no doubt was that of the ox, to agree with the former account. Or the term *cherub* being derived from a root which in the Chaldee and Syriac languages signifies to *plow*, may mean the same thing.

19. This was a partial removal of the symbol of the divine presence from the temple, as if ready to leave its earthly habitation for a heavenly one, emblematical probably, of his desertion of the place, and its approaching destruction.

Ch. XI. 3. This must refer to one of the prophecies of Jeremiah, and to the letters which he wrote to the captives in the reign of Jehoiakim, advising them to build houses, and provide for their continuance in Chaldaea seventy years:

In the city being the caldron, and the people the flesh, there seems to be an allusion to the custom of preparing the meat of the sacrifices that were to be eaten in the temple. It implied that the caldron and the flesh must not be separated.

7. This was giving a different meaning to their own words.

11. The enemy making his attack at the border in the first place.

13. As

13. As it seems probable that this Pelatiah really died while the prophet was in his trance, it would, as soon as it was known, be a great confirmation of the truth of all his predictions.

15.—*Thy brothers, the men of thy captivity.*
LXX.

This was treating those who had been carried captive with contempt, as outcasts, and that the whole country then belonged to themselves.

19.—*A new heart.* MSS.

20. This must not refer to the return from Babylon, but from their final dispersion, which has not yet taken place.

23. The symbol of the divine presence had now left both the temple and the city, as a token, no doubt, of his desertion of it, and abandoning it to destruction.

Ch: XII. The prophet is here directed to act as if he was preparing to go into captivity, to signify that those who were then in Palestine, would also be conquered, and many of them carried captive.

13. His eyes were put out, but he was brought to Babylon.

16. The great object of all the divine dispensations respecting the Israelites, was the instruction of the rest of mankind. It was to be made apparent to all the world that they were expelled from their country, and dispersed among all nations, as a punishment for their idolatry and their vices.

17. We have here, in the conduct of the prophet,
VOL. II. F f another

another sign of what would be done by all the people.

22. This must have been the language of profane persons, who, after hearing the judgments of God denounced against them by several of the preceding prophets, and the predicted desolation of the country not immediately taking place, derided them, and the visions which they pretended to have. Here they are assured that it would not be in their power to talk as they had done much longer; for that the predictions would speedily be verified.

Ch. XIII. *There is much complaint of the order of prophets or scribes in Jeremiah, as well as in this book of Ezekiel. But I do not recollect to read of it much before their time. These prophets joined with the rest of the people in their idolatrous rites, and opposed the true prophets, charging them, no doubt, with false pretensions to divine communications, and sometimes claiming it themselves.*

4. They were both cunning and rapacious.

5. They did nothing to avert the anger of God against their nation.

6. They pretended to a power of foretelling future events, but they were such as they hoped would come to pass by natural means.

9. They should never more return, and join with the rest of the people in their public assemblies, so as to have their names entered into a catalogue for that purpose.

10. These false prophets are represented as endeavouring to defend the city with walls of fortification that

that were ill built, and would not stand, so as to be any security against the determination of God to give it into the hand of the enemy.

18. Persons at their ease in the East recline on carpets, with their heads and arms supported by pillows which it was the business of women to prepare. After using these cushions, lady M. W. Montague says, she should never endure chairs again as long as she lived. By this figure they are represented as lulling men to sleep with deceitful predictions. What is meant in this place by *covering the head* is not so evident. It may mean some dress which covered the eyes, and thereby promoted sleep. *To hunt for the souls or lives* of persons, was to lay wait for their destruction, which would in effect be the issue of their conduct with respect to them.

19. That is, while ye practice idolatrous and magical rites for trifling presents. In the East bakers are paid by a part of the bread that they have baked. And compensations in bread is for services of the lowest kind.

20. The margin has *hunt a soul into the gardens*, meaning perhaps the places devoted to prostitution in the worship of Astarte.

To make them fly, is not in the LXX.

23. It shall no more be in your power to practice your idolatrous rites.

Ch. XIV. Notwithstanding the concealed or open idolatry of the Israelites, they never entertained any doubt of the power of their own God; and they were desirous of conciliating his favour as well as that of the foreign deities, which, with the rest of the world,

they perhaps considered as the original and proper goals of Palestine.

3. They practiced their idolatrous rites not openly, but in secret, as was done in the precincts of the temple at Jerusalem.

9. That is, when the false prophets predict what does not come to pass, it is God who, in the course of his providence, orders that it should be so.

14. It may be clearly inferred from this mention of *Job*, in conjunction with *Noah* and *Daniel*, that he was a real person, as well as they. This prophecy was delivered in the sixth year of the captivity in the reign of Jehoiakim, and Daniel was carried captive in the fourth of Jehoiakim, after which he reigned four years, and Jehoiachin only three months. Consequently Daniel had at this time been fourteen years in Babylon, and was, no doubt, well known, and highly respected, on account of his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This testimony of the Divine Being himself is an undeniable evidence of the eminent piety of these men.

21. If this conduct would be just with respect to other countries, much more would it be so with respect to Jerusalem.

23. The people would be reformed by these severe judgments.

Ch. XV. The Israelites are here exhibited under the character of a vine, which tho' of great value when it bears grapes, is of no use at all as wood, even when it is sound, and much less when it is burned; and this was all the use that could be made of it, viz. as fire wood.

wood. The nation was now to be destroyed for its unfruitfulness.

Ch. XVI. This chapter contains a fine and striking allegory, in which Israel is compared to an exposed female infant, taken care of, espoused, and raised to sovereign dignity, but afterwards becoming a prostitute; and yet hereafter to be received into favour, on her return to her husband.

3. This is the language of reproach, and not to be taken literally. The people were become as degenerate as if they had been descended from those stocks.

4. Water with a little salt was used in order to harden the skins of infants.

12. A principal ornament in the East is a jewel hanging from the nostril, which is perforated for that purpose.

26. They worshipped the gods of Egypt:

33. There would have been some apology for her conduct if she had prostituted herself for a reward; but she did it from mere wantonness.

37. Nothing was so opprobrious as to expose the nakedness even of men, and much more that of women.

40. The punishment of adultery was stoning to death, as we see in the gospel history, John viii, 1, &c.

42. After a sufficient punishment the nation would be reformed.

46. The face was supposed to be directed to the East, and then Samaria would be to the left hand, and Sodom to the right.

50.—*As thou hast seen.* MS. N.

53. That

* 53. That is, the district formerly occupied by Sodom will hereafter be populous and flourishing.

57. Some copies have *Edom* instead of *Syria*, the difference between these words in the Hebrew being very small.

63. This is a clear prophecy of the future happy state of the Hebrew nation, when they shall have been sufficiently punished for their apostacy, and restored to the divine favour.

Ch. XVII. The past and future state of Palestine is here described in an allegory, which is immediately afterwards explained, and the prophecy concludes with a prospect of future happy times.

3. From the subsequent explanation of the allegory this appears to mean Nebuchadnezzar.

4. He took king Jehoiachin and carried him to Babylon, which was a city that was become considerable by means of merchandise.

5. Zedekiah was made king by Nebuchadnezzar, but kept in a state of subordination and vassalage.

7. This is the king of Egypt, to whom the people of Judah applied for assistance when they revolted from the Chaldeans; and the disappointment of their expectations from him is here predicted.

12. This is an explanation of the preceding allegory.

15. This rebellion must have been between the sixth month of the sixth year, and the fifth of the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar.

22. Here, in the continuation of the same allegory, the future flourishing state of the Israelites is foretold.

Ch.

Ch. XVIII. 2. The people complained that they suffered not for their own sins, but for those of their ancestors; and as far as the fourth generation they might conclude this to be the case from the declaration of the Divine Being to Moses, when they were at the same time assured that God would shew mercy to thousands of generations of them that loved him and kept his commandments. The meaning probably was, that for the sins of that generation, and the subsequent ones, they would suffer for a time; yet on account of the piety of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the promise of God to them, their nation would hereafter, tho' after a thousand generations, and for thousands of generations to come, be most flourishing and happy. It was therefore, in fact, a prophecy concerning the fate of the nation. But whatever was the case in general, they are now assured that they should have no reason to apply this proverb to themselves. They of that generation suffered for their own sins, and in the present captivity a distinction would be made between the idolaters, and the pious worshippers of Jehovah. The same was intimated in the parable of the *good and bad figs* in Jeremiah.

6. The feasts or sacrifices to the heathen gods were held on mountains, and high places.

8. To lend upon usury was forbidden from a Hebrew to a Hebrew, in order to teach them brotherly love; but it was not forbidden with respect to strangers. It was not, therefore, considered as a thing unlawful in itself. Besides, the Hebrews were not to be a commercial people, to whom laws concerning the use

of money, are, most necessary, a profit being made, by the use of money as much as of any other commodity; so that both the person using it, and the person lending it, have each a natural claim, to the emolument accruing from it, as much as from the use of land.

9. Here is a mixture of precepts, some being of a moral, and others of a ritual nature. But if the offence be wilful, and habitual, there is in both the cases the same contempt of the authority of God in commanding the observance; so that in both the cases the offence is a proper immorality.

32. The doctrine of this chapter, according to which every person suffers only for his own sins, and is rewarded for his own virtues, is not literally true, but on the supposition of a future state, because, as Solomon says, we see that in this life *all things*, in a great measure, *fall alike to all*; and in this state of discipline it is proper that it should be so. Tho' therefore, no express mention is made of a future state in the books of the Old Testament that precede this, there are, I think, several allusions to it; and I doubt not it was the belief of the Israelites at this time, and in all times. To Daniel, who lived at this time, it was evidently well known, and to all the nation in the time of the Maccabees. For then it was nobly acted upon; great numbers enduring death and torture, with the prospect of a happy resurrection. And this belief our Saviour found well established in his time.

Ch. XIX. This chapter contains two allegories drawn up in the form of poetry, or artificial composition.

sitings, the rules of which we are not acquainted with.

3. This means Jehoiachaz, the son of Josiah, who was carried captive into Egypt, and died there.

5. This means Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah. His mal-administration is here described, and also his fate; agreeable to his history, 2 Kings, xxiv, 21. *And the Lord sent against him bands of Chaldeans, and bands of Syrians, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it.* According to the prophecy of Jeremiah, he must have died in prison, and his body have been left unburied.

7. According to the LXX; *He brought evil upon their palaces.*

10. This is another allegory, representing the former prosperous, and the then desolate, state of the country.

One ancient version has *in thy vineyard*, instead of *in thy blood*.

Ch. XX. In this chapter we have a history of all the divine dispensations with respect to the Israelites, and a prophecy of their final establishment and prosperity.

3. Whatever propensities the Israelites had to idolatry, they always retained a respect for their own God and his prophets.

5. In swearing the Jews lift up their right hand towards heaven. This explains Ps. cxliv, 8. *Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.* That is, they took false oaths.

6 We

6. We read of no part of the world so fruitful and populous as Palestine; and being a hilly country, it must be much cooler and pleasanter than any other in that part of the world.

8. This seems to refer to some admonitions given to the Israelites while they were in Egypt, of which we have no other account. The greater was the propensity of the nation to idolatry before and after the giving of the law, the stronger is the evidence of the divine origin of their religion, and of its being supported by miracles, the evidence of which, with all their prejudices, they were not able to resist.

25. The meaning of this is, that he permitted them to fall into idolatrous practices. And whatever takes place in the course of providence is, in the language of scripture, generally ascribed to the direct agency of God. That the Divine Being gave the Israelites ordinances that he himself did not approve, is a most improbable supposition. As far as appears, all the laws of Moses are to be of perpetual obligation to the nation to which they were given; and the practice of sacrificing, &c. will be resumed when they return from their present dispersion, as will appear towards the conclusion of this book.

29. The latter clause of this verse has the appearance of being out of its proper place, and is thought by some to be an interpolation, after being first inserted in the margin.

35. Here is an allusion to something of which we have no intimation in any other prophecy, viz. that when the Jews shall return from their present dispersion

sion, they will undergo a discipline similar to that which they underwent after they left Egypt, in consequence of which all the obdurate and refractory among them were cut off, and never reached the promised land. But perhaps the extermination of the wicked Israelites here alluded to, may take place during their dispersion, and before any attempt to return; they being at present considered as in a situation similar to that of the wilderness.

39. *Go take away your idols.* MSS. LXX.

This is a clear proof of the future obedience, as well as happiness, of the people after their return.

45. This is a general prediction of the misery that would befall the land of Judah, which was to the South of the place in which the prophet resided.

47. That is, all without distinction, the righteous and the wicked. They would at least be promiscuously carried captive, tho' in many respects a difference would be made between them. This proverbial language our Saviour made use of when he said to the women who wept to see him go to be crucified, if these things were done in green wood, what would be done with that which was dry, and therefore more fit for the fire.

Ch. XXI. 3. There would be a general slaughter, such as was intimated Ch. xx, 47, under the emblem of the green and dry wood, those who were ripe for destruction and those who were not. In times of general calamity, particular exemptions are not to be expected. But all inequalities will be compensated in another state.

6 This

6. This he was to do so as to be observed, that inquiry might be made concerning it.

10. Scepters were made of wood, but war spears no wood, not even that of scepters.

13 *For it is approved, and if the tribe be rejected*
LXX.

14. The regular succession to the throne was to ~~em~~ with Zedekiah. The prophet seems to have been directed to brandish a sword three times, as an emblem of the great destruction that would be made in the war.

19. He was to make a kind of map, perhaps in the sand, of the different roads by which the army of Nebuchadnezzar might march. One to the left was against the Ammonites, and another to the right was to the land of Judah.

21. In the original it is the *mother of the way*, meaning some particular road, or part of a road; a phraseology common in the East. Niebuhr says that a woman who sells butter is called *the mother of butter*.

Divination by rods, or arrows, was frequently used by the heathens in their most serious affairs. In marching to war they wrote the names of different countries, or districts, on different arrows; and having drawn one from the rest at random, were thereby directed what to do. This was done in the presence of the idol they worshipped. They also sacrificed at the same time, and judged of the success of the proposed enterprise by certain appearances in the liver of the victim. The Greeks and Romans made great use of this mode of divinations

divinations, and among the latter a distinct order of men, called *haruspices*, were employed in it: *

22. This was probably exhibited in his map before the event took place, tho' it is here related historically.

23. That is, those who had violated their faith to Nebuchadnezzar would pay no regard to his divinations. But he would reproach them for their breach of faith, and punish them for it.

24. This is an intimation of the cessation of royalty among the Israelites till the time of the Messiah, or that prince of the house of David who will reign after their restoration.

28. This reproach means the conquest of them by Nebuchadnezzar.

29. They would imagine that because Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem he could not invade them, but in this they would deceive themselves.

30. The Ammonites suffered in their own country, and were not carried into captivity as the Israelites were.

Ch. XXII. 6. Here is an enumeration of all the offences of which the Israelites were guilty, some of a moral, and others of a merely ritual nature.

13. To express his indignation at their practices.

16. In the margin it is, *shall be profaned*, perhaps *thou shalt be vile*, or appear vile, to thyself, be put to shame; as in Ch. xxii, 43. *ye shall be loathsome in your own sight*.

This is an intimation that the effects of the severe discipline

discipline to which they would be subjected would be their reformation.

18. They are here compared to base metal, which would be calcined and dispersed in the furnace, while the pure silver with which it was mixed, would stand that test, and be purified by it.

24. That is, to Jerusalem.

28. Here is an allusion to a former similitude, when the men were described as making a wall for the defence of the place with mortar that would not bind the stones together.

Ch. XXIII. In this chapter, under the parable of two prostitutes, the idolatry and the punishment of the kingdom of Israel and Judah are described.

3. That the Israelites conformed to the idolatrous religion of the Egyptians appears from many passages of scripture, but it is no where so fully expressed as in this place.

5. They adopted the religion of the Assyrians.

9. The people, whose idolatry they imitated, were made the instruments of their punishment.

14. These must have been images in the form of men, which the Chaldeans worshipped.

15. The high priest of Mithra in Persia, wore a magnificent linen turban, with many folds, in imitation of the heavenly bodies. To such turbans the prophet, some think might here allude.

17. This probably alludes to the revolt of the kings of Judah from the Chaldeans.

20. Asses are commonly said to be very lustful.

23 These

23. These were probably places within the Babylonian empire, tho' their situation is not known. Pekod is mentioned in Jeremiah Ch. 1, 21.

25. Adultery was sometimes punished in this manner, in order to disfigure the adultresses, that they might no longer allure men by their beauty.

34. This is a representation of the effect of madness, in consequence of drinking an intoxicating potion. She not only drinks the very dregs, but breaking the vessel, she tears her breasts with the sharp fragments.

39. This shews that the Israelites did not deny the divine mission of Moses, or wholly abandon the worship of Jehovah, notwithstanding their addictedness to idol worship.

40. This may allude to the ornaments of a bride when she received her husband. The women carried her to the bath, dressed her magnificently, painted and perfumed her, and then carried her to the nuptial chamber.

41.—*before thee.* MSS. A. V.

This is a description of the manner in which brides were placed on the nuptial couch.

42. This may allude to their practicing the religious rites of the Sabians, who worshipped the host of heaven.

Ch. XXIV. In this chapter the utter destruction of Jerusalem is announced by a striking allegory.

1. This would shew the exact knowledge of the Supreme Being. Ezekiel was then at a great distance from Jerusalem; and yet he was informed of the very day

day in which the siege of that city commenced; and to write it down at the time, for the conviction, no doubt, of the people in general. And accordingly the siege did commence on that very day, 2 Kings, xiv, 1. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month; and the tenth day of the month, that Nabuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his host, came up against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

3. This allegory, or metaphor is taken from the custom of boiling meat in a large caldron, after a sacrifice, the meat being to be eaten within the precincts of the temple.

5. By an easy alteration it will be, *burn the wood under it.*

The choice pieces represented the nobles and the principal persons in the city, while the bones, that were to be put into the fire under it, signified the common people.

6. The *swine* represents the wickedness of the place, as is observed v. 12. The priests took out the pieces in their turns, and by lot; but here all were to be the prey of the enemy without distinction.

10.—Remove it, and let the bottles be burned. Three MSS. *Ibid. Let the bones be put together. A few MSS.*

11. That is, make it boil as apothecaries do when they prepare their medicines, the process for which often continues a considerable time, till a large quantity be reduced to a small one. Besides the pot itself was to be burned after all its contents were consumed, to signify

signify that the city itself was to be destroyed, as well as the people in it.

14—*Will I judge thee.* MSS. A. V.

15. The prophets were frequently directed to exhibit in their own persons the fate of the nations against which they prophesied, and this sometimes subjected them to disagreeable circumstances. Of this we have had several examples; but this must have been more so than any that we have read of before. The prophet was to lose his wife by sickness, and observe none of the customary tokens of mourning, in order to represent the great destruction that was about to be made of his countrymen, when every person would be so much occupied about his own safety, as not to be at leisure to attend to the funerals of his nearest relations.

17. To express humility and meekness, they put off their shoes, and to cover the head and the mouth were tokens of grief, as was observed on a former occasion. See 2 Sam. xix, 4. Micah iii, 7. To eat the food of mourners was to partake of the provisions which were brought by friends, on the idea of mourners neglecting themselves.

This eating may refer to the custom of making entertainments at funerals. And besides what was eaten in the house, it appears from Tobit iv, 17, that provisions were carried to the grave to be eaten by the poor. This too nearly resembled the heathen custom of carrying food to the tombs of the deceased, for the ghost to feed upon.

20. Part of this precept may have been taken from Lev. xxi, 5, and the other part from v. 10. They were not to imitate the heathens, and especially the Egyptians, who expressed sorrow sometimes by shaving the head, and sometimes by neglecting the hair, and suffering it to hang in a loose and disorderly state. *Spencer*, p. 583. But when the Hebrew priests officiated, they were forbidden to exhibit any sign of mourning.

27. Tho' he was not to cover his mouth, he was to sigh in silence, and not to speak till a person came to him from Jerusalem, to inform him that the city was taken, as we find Ch. xxxiii, 21, &c.

Ch. XXV. These prophecies were delivered after the taking of Jerusalem, and consequently before the events that are related in the preceding chapters. But all the prophecies concerning the neighbouring nations are placed together.]

Instead of assisting the people of Judah, as they seem to have engaged to do by their alliance with them, they rejoiced immoderately in the destruction of Jerusalem; but, agreeably to the predictions of Jeremiah, they were all destined to undergo the same fate themselves, and from the same power.

4. The Chaldeans.

9. They were conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, together with other nations.

13. Teman and Dedan were cities of Idumea. Teman was one of the sons of Ishmael, and Dedan was the grandson of Abraham by Keturah. Gen. xxv, 3. The Edomites had probably dispossessed them.

14 The

14. The Edomites were reduced into subjection by the Jews after their return from Babylon, and incorporated into their own nation on their conforming to their religion.

16. Some of the Philistines are called *Cherethites*, probably from their coming from Crete. There was perhaps a division among the Philistines, in consequence of their having been two people united. And as David had in his service both *Pelethites*, and *Cherethites*, who were equally of that nation, they may have been of these two different extractions.

Ch. XXVI. 1.—*In the twelfth year.* MSS. LXX.

2.—*She that was full is laid waste.* MSS: LXX. &c.

3. This prophecy concerning the desolation of Tyre, then perhaps the wealthiest city in the world, and the least apprehensive of danger, extends to a very distant period. It is at this time in the state that is here represented, but it has required a long series of time to bring it to it, and therefore *the many nations* here spoken of, may perhaps mean many enemies in succession, and not merely the army of Nebuchadnezzar, tho' composed of many nations.

4. Earth was often carried to places where there was none, to enable it to bear vines and other plants. This process would be reversed with respect to Tyre.

5. Maundrel says, "the present inhabitants of Tyre are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in vaults, and subsisting chiefly by fishing." *Travels* p. 49. As Tyre is here said to be in the midst of the

sea, it is probable that antient Tyre stood on a peninsula, like Carthage, tho' not wholly surrounded by the sea.

14. No city was ever built where antient Tyre stood, viz. on the continent; and it is not probable that any will ever be built on the island, where the second city of that name stood.

16 This is a fine description of a lamentation over Tyre, by other countries similarly situated.

19. Deep, and great waters, in this place, probably signify *armies*, alluding to the sea on which Tyre stood.

20—*And thou shalt not rise up on the land of the living, LXX.*

This may be rendered, *nor display glory in the land of the living:*

Ch. XXVII. The prophecy concerning the destruction of Tyre, contained in this and the following chapter, is of great extent, and was it perfectly intelligible at this distance of time, it would be the most satisfactory account of the state of manufactures and commerce in this early age that can be collected from all antient writers.

3. Tyre was the great centre of merchandize to all parts of the Mediterranean, with which they had a communication by sea, and goods of all kinds were brought to that city by land in caravans, from all parts of Arabia.

4.—*Thy children have perfected thy beauty. MSS: A. V.*

5 Senir

5. Senir is part of the ridge of mount Hermon, in the eastern part of the tribe of Manasseh.

6. Cedars standing single have many branches, and the limbs are not fit for masts of ships ; but where they grow close together, as in the woods of America, no tree is straiter, taller, or more fit for the purpose.

7. With a slight alteration in a Hebrew word this may be rendered, *thy benches have been made of the box tree*. But whether ivory or box was used, it must have been for ornament ; and therefore it can only apply to vessels of some elegance, and not such as were constructed for the mere purpose of trade.

Instead of *a sail*, it may be *a standard*, or *flag*, which might be of fine linen, rather than a sail of a ship.

Chittim may signify any island, or sea coast in the Mediterranean. Cetia was a city of Latium, and Cetus was a river near Cumæ. The fine linen of Egypt is often mentioned in the scriptures.

8. Elisha was Peleponnesus, which was famous for its purple. The *covering* in this place may mean the awning of some part of a ship.

Arvad was the island of Aradus, at the mouth of the river Eleutherus, on the coast of Phenicia,

9. Gebal was perhaps Biblos on the same coast.

10. Lud was an Egyptian colony, whether from Misraim or Shem.

Phut was the African Nomades.

11. Gammadim were perhaps the inhabitants of Ancon and Phenicia; both the words signify *a cubit*. Gammale was a city in that country, according to Pliny.

By *Gammadim* in this place are probably to be understood images generally about a cubit in length, which were usually fixed by the heathens in houses and towers for their preservation, *Spencer* p. 464. The passage will be more intelligible if the part of the verse relating to the *Gammadim* be put into a parenthesis. One reason for making images of this small size, besides the convenience of more easy conveyance, and of erecting and fixing them where larger images could not be placed, was that in the common opinion the image was no longer of use than it was preserved entire, and small images were less liable to accidents, or mutilation, than larger ones, *Ibid.* 469.

For *Gommadim* some MSS. have *Gomerians* who dwelt in Galatia, Cappadocia, and Phrygia.

12. *Tarshish* was either *Tartessus* in Spain or some place in Africa or the East Indies, to which they went by the red sea.

13. *Javan* was Greece. *Tubal* and *Meshech* were the sons of *Japheth*. The people called *Tibereni* and *Moschi* are meant here. They are generally mentioned together, and were situated near mount *Caucasus*.

14. *Togarmah* some think to be the country of the *Turkmans*. *Bochart* makes it to be *Cappadocia*, and *Michaelis* *Armenia*.

15. *Dedan* was a city on the *Persian gulph*, now called *Dadan*. To this place the people of many of the Eastern nations brought their commodities.

16. Some think this word ought to be *Edom*, which, in the Hebrew character, nearly resembles *Aram*, the name

name of Syria ; especially as Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, is mentioned afterwards, and purple and coral might come from the red sea, but not from Syria. The *agate* in this place means the *ruby*.

17. Panic is a kind of bread corn said to be of much use in long voyages. Mr. Harris thinks that this *pan-nag*, as it is in the Hebrew, was the valuable plant called *panax*, which was an ingredient in a composition to which recourse was had in many diseases. Whence the word *panacea* came to signify an universal medicine.

18. *Edom was thy merchant.* MSS. A. V.

Chalybonian wine, which was the produce of a place near Damascus, was much esteemed. The kings of Persia are said to have drank no other. Chalybon is supposed to be the modern Aleppo.

19. The reading here is probably erroneous, and some Greek copies have Doidan, which was a city in Idumea, and this is in the text of Jerom. The word here rendered *cassia* occurs only in this place, and in Ex. xxx, 24. It is not the cassia now used as a medicine ; but either another called by Pliny *isocinnamon*, because equal to cinnamon in value, or what is extracted from the *costus*, the best of which is brought from Arabia. *Harris*.

Javan from Uzal may mean Jeman in Arabia, from Uzal a city in that district, now Sana, the metropolis of Arabia Felix.

22. Sheba is thought by some to be in Arabia Felix, but Mr. Bruce places it in Africa, opposite to Arabia. Raamah was the son of Cush, and father of Sheba, probably settled in Arabia Felix.

23 *Haran and Calne*, MSS. *Canaan LXX. Syr.*

This was Haran Alcarin in Arabia. Calneh was Ctesiphon in Chaldea. Eden was probably in Armenia. But Michaelis thinks that Aden in Arabia Felix was meant in this place. Sheba here mentioned was, no doubt, a different place from that which was mentioned before; and it appears from Gen. x, 7,—20. that there were three nations of this name. Chilmad was Caramenia beyond the Euphrates.

26. After this description of the extensive trade and great wealth of Tyre, the prophet announces its destruction.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. This prince according to Josephus, was called Itobal.

2. The wisdom of Daniel must have been greatly celebrated, tho' all the secrets that he revealed, he had from supernatural communication, as he always acknowledged.

10. The term *uncircumcised*, was an expression of contempt with the Jews, as *barbarian* was with the Greeks.

11. What is here called a *lamentation* was a poetical or artificial composition, differing from prose writing, tho', with respect to the Hebrew language, that difference is now unknown.

12. The LXX, has *the seal of imitation*, the Tyrians being a pattern to other nations, and their instructors in the arts.

13. *Thou hast been as Eden.* MSS.

That is, tho' he enjoyed every delight. The *covering* here mentioned must mean the canopy of the throne

throne. The Seventy enumerates twelve different precious stones. The tabrets and pipes might be ornamented with gold.

14. This is perhaps an allusion to the golden cherubs over the ark, which were anointed at their consecration. The *son of fire* is an allusion to the curious breast plate worn by the High Priest, which was very splendid.

16. In consequence of growing rich, the kings of Tyre, became, like other princes, luxurious, and oppressive.

18. Perhaps he had acted in contempt of both gods and men.

26. This is an allusion to a distant period, when the Israelites will be finally settled in their own country, and all the nations that have oppressed them will be punished.

Ch. XXIX In the time of Ezekiel the only rival power to that of the Chaldeans was Egypt; and in the protection of this country the kings of Judah thought themselves safe, tho' they were abundantly warned by their prophets that their confidence would fail them. But, of all the prophets, Ezekiel dwells the most largely on the future condition of Egypt, as well as on the events that were near at hand respecting it; and his predictions concerning its fate in the most distant ages are at this day verified in a most remarkable manner. The king of Egypt at that time was Pharaoh Hophra, called by the Greek writers *Apries*.

3. This *great dragon* means the crocodile to which the king of Egypt is naturally compared. The haughtiness

tinefs and impiety of this king is noticed by Herodotus. He said that no god was able to deprive him of his kingdom.

5. Apries, in his expedition against the Cyrenians, was taken prisoner by Amasis, and strangled by the Egyptians.

7. The Egyptians retired into their own country on the approach of the Chaldeans, after pretending to march against them, to the assistance of Zedekiah.

10. Migdol was a city in the North of Egypt, and Syene in the Southern extremity of it, bordering on Ethiopia.

11. This language is, no doubt, hyperbolical ; but in consequence of the civil wars in the reign of Amasis, the conquest of the country by Nebuchadnezzar, and again by Cyrus, it must have suffered exceedingly ; and travelling in it must have been very unsafe, and these events took up the space of about forty years.

12. Berofus says that Nebuchadnezzar carried many Egyptians captive, and removed them to Pontus.

14. Pathros was in Thebais. Egypt never recovered itself, but was ever after subject to foreigners.

16. That is, causing God to remember and punish the iniquity of his people.

17. This must have been one of the last of Ezekiel's prophecies.

18. Nebuchadnezzar is here considered as God's hired servant, appointed to do his work ; and the taking of Tyre was one of the services on which he was sent. This proving a labourious work, he is promised the plunder of Egypt as his reward. When the Tyrians found
found

found, after a siege of thirteen years, that they could not hold out any longer, they embarked on board their ships, and carried away every thing of much value to their distant settlements on the Mediterranean ; so that Nebuchadnezzar found nothing of much value in the place.

21. Some particular favour must have been shewn to the Israelites about this time, but no mention is made of it in history. It is evident, however, that Daniel, and other Jews, were in great favour at the court of Babylon, and Jehoiachin was released from prison and taken into favour by the son of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ch. XXX. This was probably about the same time with the preceding vision.

5. Chub is nowhere mentioned except in this place. It must have been some country contiguous to Egypt. All Arabia in this place must mean only all of it that was in alliance with Egypt, and the whole of it never was. The Arabs always consisted of many independent tribes.

9—*Go forth in haste.* LXX.

Ships in this place must mean vessels on the Nile, by which they could ascend to Ethiopia.

12. Making *the river dry*, must mean that it would be no protection to them, the army of the enemy meeting with no obstruction from it. Or perhaps it may mean that it would not rise so high as it usually did, when a famine would be the consequence.

13. This prophecy has been most remarkably fulfilled. This country has in succession been subject to the

the Chaldeans, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Arabs, Mamelukes, and Turks; nor is there the least prospect of any native Egyptian reigning in the country, or of the people recovering their former consequence.

14. Noph was Memphis, Zoan Tanis, No Thebes, and Sin Pelusium.

17—*And the women shall go into captivity.* MSS. LXX.

On was Heliopolis, and Phibefeth Bubastum.

21. *That is, he was determined to break it.*

Ch. XXXI. By the fall of the Assyrian monarchy, compared to that of a great tree, that of Egypt is here foretold. The allegory is finely supported through the whole of this chapter.

8. What is here called the *chestnut*, should have been the *plane tree*. Harris.

12. The Assyrian empire was overturned by the Medes and Babylonians.

14. This should have been a warning to other nations.

15. To cover the head was a token of mourning, and here the sea is represented as in that state. Or it may be rendered, *I made the deep to cover him*, alluding to the manner in which Nineveh was taken, which Diodorus Siculus says was by means of the river rising and breaking down a part of the wall, so as to give a passage to the enemy.

16. Other kingdoms which had fallen in former times, rejoiced in the fall of this great empire.

18 Pharaoh

18. Pharaoh, whose pride resembled that of the Assyrian monarchs, would soon share their fate.

Ch. XXXII. 1—*In the eleventh year.* MSS. Syr.

After the preceding prediction, the prophet is directed to compose a formal lamentation on the subject, as he had done for the fall of Tyre, and the images introduced into it are truly sublime.

6. Rather *their canals* in which the waters of the Nile were conveyed to the distant parts of the country.

14. *Then will I cause their waters to subside, and their streams to run slowly like oil*, which is agreeable to the antient versions.

There being no cattle to disturb the rivers by their trampling in them, they would be clear.

16. Such compositions as these were sung by women, as the song of Moses, and others of which mention is made in the scriptures.

17—*In the eleventh year.* MSS. Syr.

18. Here is a representation of a great pit, with cells at the bottom of it, like graves, for the different nations which had fallen before that of Egypt; and these are made to address the king of Egypt on his arrival among them.

21. If this verse be put before the 19th, the sense will be clearer.

24. Elam was conquered by the Medes and Babylonians.

26. This must refer to the expulsion of the Scythians from the southern part of Asia, after they had ravaged it twenty eight years. Cyaxares, Herodotus says, invaded

vited their leaders to an entertainment; and having made them drunk, massacred them all.

— *And shall lie with the mighty.* LXX.

27. Chardin says that in Mingrelia, men sleep with their swords under their heads, and that they are buried in the same manner. Here the prophet may intimate, that they shall be buried without the usual martial solemnities with which the persons of that country honoured their dead.

31. It would be a consolation to the king of Egypt to find so many other princes in the same state with himself.

32. God raised him up to be a terror to others before his fall.

Ch. XXXIII. From the prophecy contained in this chapter (from the beginning to v. 21) it should seem to have been a very early communication to Ezekiel, as it relates to the discharge of his duty as a prophet.

10. That is, our sufferings are so great, that the nation must perish, and consequently the happiness promised to us in a future time cannot take place.

20. It clearly follows from the maxims of the divine administration, so distinctly laid down in this place, that no character is absolutely fixed with respect to virtue and vice in this life. As the sinner may repent, the virtuous may become vicious; and all men will be treated hereafter according to their character, when this state of discipline closes.

21. Some MSS. and the Syriac version, have the *eleventh* year, which is thought a more probable reading. For then not quite six months will have intervened between the

the

the taking of the city and the arrival of the messenger to inform him of it ; whereas, according to the present reading, it will have been a year five months and twenty six days.

22. He was directed not to speak till this messenger arrived, Ch. xxiv, 25, &c.

24. This seems to relate to those who were left in the land of Judah after the taking of Jerusalem, who are here threatened with farther calamity for their continued idolatry and vices.

25. Shepherds in the East often sleep in the open air.

26. The antient heathens imagined that ghosts were afraid of a sword, and therefore they used one to fright away such of them as they wished not to partake of their offerings. Thus, when Ulysses is represented by Homer as wishing to consult Tiresias in the infernal regions, he goes with a drawn sword in his hand, and having poured blood into a ditch, to draw the ghosts in general about him, he drove away all but that of Tiresias, and he could not approach till the sword was withdrawn. Odyss. xi, 48.

30. They derided the prophet, and after hearing him, paid no attention to what he had said.

33. Some of the events predicted by Ezekiel came to pass in a very short time ; and no doubt the exact fulfilment of his predictions, and those of Jeremiah, and other prophets, about this time, made a lasting and happy impression on great numbers. For after the Babylonish captivity the Jews were a very different people from what they had been before ; not free from vice,
but

but cured of every propensity to idolatry, and without any false pretensions to prophecy. Their sacred books were carefully collected, and the greatest respect entertained for them ; and this continues to the present day wherever there are Jews, tho' dispersed in every part of the world. The case of the ten tribes, who went into captivity long before this period, and who had not the same advantage of prophetic instruction, is very different. Wherever they are, they, no doubt, conform to the religion of the people among whom they live, as Moses foretold they would do.

Ch. XXXIV. After giving an account of the then wretched condition of the Israelites, in consequence of bad government, the prophet is directed to announce the termination of it, and to open a prospect of future happy times, under a much better government.

1. By *shepherds* in this place are not meant prophets, at least not principally, but civil governors, who oppressed the people for their own emolument.

10. This implies that an end would be put to regal government for the present. And from this time there have been no kings of that family. The Maccabees, who bore rule afterwards, were priests, and Herod was of Idumea.

11. The governors having failed in their duty, God, who was at all times their supreme governor, would himself take the charge of them, and restore every thing.

12. The LXX. has, *in the day in which clouds and darkness are among the sheep.*

16. *I will preserve the fat and the strong.* MSS. A.V.

17. Not

17. Not only would he punish the shepherds, or the governors, but make a proper distinction between the virtuous and the vicious among the people. That many of the refractory and disobedient will perish in the great dispersion, and those of a better disposition chiefly be preserved, is frequently intimated in prophecy: This will, therefore, resemble the passage of the Israelites through the wilderness before their settlement in the land of Canaan, when all those that murmured, died before they reached the promised land.

23. This evidently refers to the final restoration of the Israelites, when princes of the family of David will be set over them; but, no doubt, in subordination to the Messiah.

29. This happy state is to have no termination, but to continue to the end of time; which shews that this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled.

30. *And the nations shall know.* MSS. LXX. &c.

31. With a little alteration, to make it agree with the LXX. it will be, *and ye are my flock, the flock of my pasture are ye, and I am your God, saith the Lord Jehovah.*

Ch. XXV. The Edomites, tho' descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob, having, with other neighbouring nations, rejoiced in the calamity of the Israelites, they are here threatened with severe calamity themselves, and without any return of prosperity, such as was promised to the posterity of Jacob.

9. — *Thy cities shall not be inhabited,* MSS. LXX.

There is not at present any city or town in the country that was called Idumea; and at the restoration

on of the Jews there are intimations in other prophecies that it will be occupied by them, and not by any remains of the former inhabitants.

Ch. XXXVI. This is another prediction of a future time of great and never ending prosperity to the Israelites, in language that cannot be misunderstood.

8. Here the term *near*, if the prophecy respects a time that is even yet future, as it evidently does, must mean *certain*, what appeared near in the eye of God. *The return from Babylon might be said to be near, but what is here said of the state of the country, and especially of the people after their return, will by no means apply to that event.*

12. Here it appears that this happy state of things is to be permanent, and have no more interruption.

20. They gave occasion to other nations to speak with contempt of the people of God, and consequently of God himself, whose people they were.

25. This is one of the clearest prophecies of the future virtuous, as well as flourishing, state of the Israelites, in their settlement hereafter in Palestine. What is here ascribed to the immediate hand of God, may be the natural consequence of the discipline to which they will be subjected.

32. It was not for the sake of this one nation that they were so distinguished; but that some one nation should be distinguished in this manner, and made the instructors of other nations with respect to religion, the knowledge and worship of the true God, was the best plan for the improvement of the whole world. And according to all the prophecies, the greatest advantage will

will accrue to the whole world from the future condition of the Hebrew nation, as appears more especially in the writings of Isaiah and Zechariah.

Ch. XXXVII. By a most striking comparison is here shewn the restoration of the Israelites from a state of utter destruction to future prosperity.

9. Here we see that the difference between a dead man and a living one, is nothing more than the property of *breathing*. Nothing is said of an *immaterial soul*, entering into them, or of any such thing having formerly belonged to them, and having been in some other place while the body was dead, and the bones thus exposed.

12. Nothing, probably, is here meant, but that the Israelites will be recovered from a state resembling death, the extinction of the nation, in their dispersion through all the world. However, it seems probable from other passages of scripture, that a real resurrection will take place at that time, and the Jews in general expect it. There is to be no termination of the prosperous state of the nation; and can it be supposed that their great ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, will have no knowledge, or enjoyment, of it?

14. From those who are said to be raised from the grave being placed in their own land, we may infer that they will cultivate the land, and live on the fruits of it, which will not be the case of those who shall be raised from the dead, and whose bodies will be of another nature, not liable to corruption or death, and therefore not wanting such nourishments as our present bodies require.

16. By a happy and striking emblem, the future union of all the twelve tribes under one prince is here clearly foretold.

20. It seems that a miracle was wrought for their satisfaction, similar to that of the rod of Moses being changed into a serpent; the two sticks becoming one in the hand of the prophet.

23. This is a clear intimation of the future virtuous, as well as happy, state of the nation.

25. This is in agreement with many other prophecies. In what manner any of the nation can be known to be of the family of David, does not yet appear; but it may be sufficiently evident at the time.

Ch. XXXVIII. In this chapter, and the following, we have a prophecy of a most extraordinary kind; of events to take place at a very distant period, even long after the settlement of the Israelites in their own country, which was predicted in the preceding chapter.

2. Magog was the son of Japhet, tho' in this place the word denotes the country of Gog, which is never mentioned before. It is, however, pretty evident, that some Scythian nation is intended. The Arabs call the Chinese wall, the wall of Gog and Magog. The Scythians were masters of Media, twenty eight years before they were expelled from that country by Cyaxares, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah. After this expulsion, Nebuchadnezzar is thought to have assisted in invading them.

The river Araxes was called Rhos; and the Russians are thought to have had their origin in its neighbourhood.

6 From

6. From Gomer was descended the antient Cimmerians, who inhabited the peninsula of Crim Tartary: They were also called Cimbri, and Celtæ. From them were descended the antient inhabitants of Gaul and Britain. All the nations here mentioned must have composed an army collected from all parts of the world, but the Northern nations, or Scythians, must have had the direction of this great force.

12. This must have been after the people had been long settled, and at peace, and therefore it cannot be the same invasion that is described by Zechariah, which was intended to prevent their settlement, immediately after their return.

13. Why these people are introduced is not said. But being *traders*, they might come to purchase slaves, and the plunder of the country.

17. As no prophecy is extant concerning Gog, the meaning probably is, that the fate of these people will be the same, that all the antient prophets announced concerning other enemies of the Israelites, who were all devoted to destruction.

20. This is a description of an earthquake, but whether a natural, or only a metaphorical one, meaning a commotion in the people, cannot be known before the event.

21. The defeat of this great host will be effected in part by dissention among themselves, and in part by the immediate hand of God. But nothing is here said of any calamity befalling the Israelites, as in Zachariah. It is therefore a different event, and posterior to it, the same with the destruction of Gog and Magog in the

Revelation, which is described as taking place after the Millenium.

Ch XXXIX. 7. This seems to be the final destruction of the enemies of the Israelites, after which the knowledge and worship of the true God will be universal, tho' it will be in a great measure so presently after their settlement. But that it will not be wholly so, is sufficiently intimated by Zechariah, who announces the judgments that will be inflicted on the nations that will not send their offerings to Jerusalem.

10. This language must, no doubt, be hyperbolic, and only signify that the army of the invaders will be very numerous ; or it may mean that some places near the seat of the slaughter will be supplied with fuel from their weapons for a number of years, tho' not exactly seven, which is often used to denote a considerable number in general.

12. Seven months is another indefinite space of time.

17. This is fine imagery, an invitation to the beasts and birds of prey to come and feast on the carcasses of the slain. But what must we say to the prejudice and malice of Voltaire, who could from this passage infer that the Jews were cannibals, and that the invitation was addressed to them ; and who, when the true sense was pointed out to him, could maintain that it was ambiguous, and that it would admit of his construction ?

23. This language is used in prophecy concerning the return of the Israelites from their present dispersion ; but this great subsequent event will confirm their faith.

29 This

29. This is evidently a reference to a time that is not yet come.

Ch. XL. These last chapters of Ezekiel are very unlike anything that we meet with in any of the other prophets. But several circumstances in them shew that they relate to the final settlement of the Israelites in their own country, and not to any thing of an intermediate nature. When Ezekiel wrote this, the city of Jerusalem and the temple were in ruins, and the royal family in exile at Babylon. Here we have an account of a new city, and a new temple, a new division of the country, and new regulations respecting the royal family, and other things, such as had never been practised before, or have been attempted to be reduced to practice since. They must, therefore, if they ever have any effect, relate to a time that is yet future.

Some say they *ought* to have taken place immediately after the return from Babylon. But would Ezra and Nehemiah, so zealous as they were for the observance of every divine ordinance, and who must have known of these prophecies, have made no mention of them, or have made no proposal or attempt to reduce them into practice, if they had so understood them? Would not our Saviour also have reproached the Jews for so flagrant a neglect of the commands of God, if it had been a neglect? And would so particular a description of the country, the city, and the temple, &c. have been given by the Divine Being, if he had foreseen that no attention would ever be given to it.

Several things also in this prophecy did not depend on the Jews themselves. It supposes the family of Da-

vid to be restored to the throne, the ten tribes to be recovered from a state of exile, and united with that of Judah and Benjamin, the symbol of the divine presence to return to the temple, a new river to arise from the precincts of it, to sweeten the waters of the dead sea, and make it abound with fish. The Jews, returning from Babylon, and seeing these things connected with this particular structure of the temple, and new division of the country, might well take it for granted that the prophecy did not relate to their times. If the particulars above mentioned were not intended to be a literal account of the new state of the country, they have no relation to the country at all. Both this, and the people too, must have some allegorical meaning. As certainly, therefore, as there has been, and is a nation of Israelites, and a country called Palestine, so certainly are they to be brought to inhabit it again, and to do the things that are here directed to be done.

Some have contended for the figurative interpretation of these chapters, because mention is made in them of the resumption of sacrifices, and other particulars of the temple service. But I am persuaded that both circumcision, and their antient mode of worship is to distinguish that nation to the end of time. Circumcision was solemnly declared to be a perpetual ordinance, as a mark of the covenant that God made with Abraham, and this was never revoked. Not only did our Saviour conform to the worship of the temple; but the apostles also, and all the Jewish christians after his death, tho' the Gentile christians were excused. Having given
my

my reasons at large for this opinion in the *Theological Repository*, I shall not repeat them all in this place.

3. The prophet seems to have been placed in full view of a city and a temple actually built, the dimensions of which he was directed to notice for the use of his countrymen. The mountain on which he stood might be only in vision, to give him a better opportunity of observing what passed under his eye, and not any eminence, as the mount of Olives, near Jerusalem.

The appearance of brass means bright and splendid.

5. Each of these cubits, of which six made one reed, exceeded the common cubit by an hand breadth; so that it must have been about half a yard. Consequently this outer wall was only three yards high, and as many thick.

6. Having passed the court inclosed with this low wall, he comes to describe the Eastern gate of the proper outer court, called the court of Israel.

7. These chambers for the porters were built on each side of the gateway.

8. This verse is superfluous, and inconsistent with v. 9. It is, therefore, thought to be an interpolation. But there is so much difficulty and uncertainty in the version and interpretations of many things here described, that I shall not dwell upon them.

17. This outer court, or that of Israel, is mentioned, 2 Kings xxi, 5. Herod added a third court, called the court of the Gentiles:

23 The

23. The inner court was the court of the priests, where they performed the rites of sacrifice undisturbed by the people.

30. This verse is thought to be an interpolation. It is not in two of the Vatican MSS. or in one of the Seventy.

49.—*and the breadth ten cubits.* LXX. N.

Ch. XLI. 2. The whole breadth was twenty cubits, the same with that of the temple of Solomon.

4. This is the same length and width of the Holy of holies as in the temple of Solomon.

5. This was the thickness of the wall of the temple at the bottom.

6. According to Josephus, there were chambers three stories high all round the temple of Solomon, each story containing thirty chambers. It is supposed that twelve were to the North of the temple, as many to the South, and six to the West.

12. By the *separate places* is probably meant the ground on which there was no building.

The dimensions of the temple, and of the places adjoining to it, are thus collected by Newcome.

The breadth of the temple v. 2, was	-	20 Cubits
—The two side walls v. 5.	-	12
—The two chambers v. 5.	-	8
—Their outer walls v. 9.	-	10
—The space that was left v. 11.	-	10
—The outer wall on each side v. 12.	-	10

70

The

The wall of ninety cubits extended farther from West to East by twenty cubits. For

The length of the temple v. 2, 4, was 60 Cubits.

The breadth of one side wall at the

West	-	-	-	6
Of one chamber	-	-	-	4
Of one outer wall	-	-	-	5
Of the space that was left	-	-	-	5
Of the outer wall at each end	-	-	-	10

90

19. These cherubims seem to have had no more than two faces, but they were the two principal ones, viz. those of a man and of a lion, denoting wisdom and strength.

Ch. XLII. 1. One MS. has the inner court, or that of the priests, which was certainly intended in this place.

3.—*Over against the gates.* LXX.

16, 17—*Five hundred cubits.* LXX. Arab. N.

Ch. XLIII. 2. In a former vision he had seen the symbol of the divine presence leaving the temple. It now returns to it never to depart any more. This, therefore must refer to a time that is yet future.

3.—*When he came.* Vul.

7. Instead of the *carcases* of the kings, a very slight alteration will make it the *graven images* of their kings, perhaps images made by the kings. For the kings were not buried so near the temple as to pollute it, tho' both Manasseh and Ammon were buried in the king's gar-

garden, which was not far from the temple ; nor do we read of the Israelites making images, or statues, of their kings.

8. The threshold is particularly respected in the East. It is there that persons prostrate themselves when they enter a palace. This was done by the Persian devotees at the tombs of their saints.

17. This altar, like that of Solomon, was ten feet high, and twenty broad.

Ch. XLIV. 2. In Persia, when a great man has built a palace, *he entertains his prince in it several days, during which the great gate through which he entered is open. But when the festival is over, and the prince departed, it is shut, and never opened any more.*

3. This is a regulation peculiar to these latter times, to which the prophecy relates, nothing of the kind having been observed before. The place for the prince was some room in the gate leading to the court of the priests. He did not go into their court, any more than other persons who were not priests or Levites, though there was no part of the temple which it was absolutely forbidden to the common people to enter, except the Holy place, in the temple itself.

9. Who are now the descendants of Zadoc, it is, I presume, impossible to say with certainty, any more than who are of the posterity of David. But according to other prophecies there will be at this time frequent divine communications, and by this means may not only the descendants of Zadoc, and of David, but of all the twelve tribes, be known.

19. What-

19. Whatever touched the altar, or the furniture of the tabernacle, was in some sense holy ; and perhaps also what had touched the garment of a priest might be so too ; so that it could not afterwards be applied to any common use.

21. The priests were not forbidden to drink wine except during the time of their ministration. This regulation, and the following, are the same that were prescribed by Moses.

Ch. XLV. 5. A little alteration in the Hebrew text will make it *gates to dwell in*, meaning perhaps places of temporary residence. Cities they could not be.

6. This rectangle contains an area of about seventeen miles circuit, which is more than four times the circuit of ancient Jerusalem.

8. Tho' the Hebrew nation will have kings, they will have no power to tax the people. And besides these restrictions of law, the Divine Being himself, or the Messiah, will be their supreme governor, to whom these princes will be accountable.

14. The *homer* was equal to the *Cor*.

18. An annual ceremony seems to be here enjoined, and not a mere dedication. The regulations about sacrifices which follow, are, as Michaelis has observed, in several particulars different from those in Moses.

Ch. XLVI. 4—7. These proportions of the flour and burnt offerings are different from those in the laws of Moses. The reason for the change it is in vain to attempt to investigate.

6. *Thou shalt take a young bullock.* MS3.

9. This

9. This is thought to be in opposition to the custom of the heathens, who, perhaps in imitation of the motions of the heavenly bodies, made a circuit from the left to the right in their religious ceremonies. On the contrary the Hebrews are here directed to go out of the temple at the gate opposite to that at which they had entered.

10. The prince and the people were to begin and conclude their worship at the same time.

18. It is very possible that, in consequence of these regulations, the inheritance of the prince may come in time to be so divided, that, being alienated forever, little may be left. But the same may be the case with other estates, divided among a numerous offspring.

Ch. XLVII. The account of this river agrees with that which is described in Zachariah Ch. xiv, 8. only that the latter is described as flowing in two directions, one branch to the Mediterranean, and the other to the dead sea; and nothing is there said of any effect that it is to have on the waters of that sea, or of the trees on its banks.

9. This lake is said to be so salt that no fish can live in it.

10. Engedi was at the Southern part of the lake, and Eneglaim at the Northern part. The *great sea* means the Mediterranean.

12. In some climates there are trees that have both blossoms and fruit in all seasons of the year. These may be of that kind, or there may be something hyperbolical in the description; signifying that the fruit will be in great abundance, and shall seldom fail. The
leaves

leaves of many plants are used in applications to wounds.

15. Hethlon is supposed to be situated between Tyre and Damascus, and Zedad is nearly in the same latitude. Hauran is the district of Auranitis. All these places are in the Northern limit of the country ; but the exact situation of several of them is not known.

18. The East sea, is the dead sea.

19. Tamar is called Hazazon Tamar, or Engedi, 2 Chron. xx, 2, According to this boundary, the Hebrew nation will occupy the greatest part of all the country that formerly belonged to the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and the Philistines ; and this is agreeable to other prophecies. If it include Damascus, as some suppose, and likewise take in the desert as far as the Euphrates, and that desert be made habitable, the country will be several times larger than that which the Israelites occupied before.

22. Several prophecies intimate, that many persons of other nations will join the Israelites after their return, and be incorporated with them. And it appears from this passage, that they may settle in whatever part of the country they please ; so that the original Israelites will have no advantage whatever over them.

Ch. XLVIII. This division of the country is entirely different from that which obtained before.

8. The portion for the sanctuary is not to be in the centre of all the tribes, for seven have been mentioned before it.

22. According to the map drawn from this account by Calmet, the sanctuary will occupy a square of five hundred

hundred cubits. Next to it, and enclosing it on all sides, will be the city of the Levites, four thousand five hundred cubits square, and eighteen miles in circuit. The suburbs of this city will be two hundred and fifty cubits broad. It will have twelve gates, three on each side. Surrounding all this will be the city occupied by those who are not of the tribe of Levi, five thousand cubits in breadth, and twenty five thousand in length. On the North and South sides of this city, but not on the East or West, will be a space for the maintenance of the artisans; and on the East and West of the whole, but not extending farther North or South, will be the portion for the prince.

35. The name of the city will not be Jerusalem, as formerly, tho' it will occupy the same ground but *Yehovah Shamma*, signifying the presence of God in it.

GEN.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THE SUBJECT OF

P R O P H E C Y.

1. **T**HE nature and order of events must be considered as fixed antecedent to any prophecies concerning them ; and in this natural order of events no regard is paid to *whole numbers*, which are almost all that occur in prophecy. We are not, therefore, to expect exactness with respect to these numbers ; but only a time pretty near to the commencement, or the termination, of the events. All numbers of frequent occurrence may be termed whole numbers, as *seven* and *twelve* as well as *ten* or a *hundred*, also, *years* and *half years* &c. And the end of prophecy is sufficiently answered by announcing the *certainty* of any important event, and fixing a time pretty near the truth. When the event has taken place, the evidence of its having been foreseen may be sufficiently striking ; and a general expectation about the time will be a sufficient

encouragement to hope, and at the same time exercise the patience and the sagacity of the believer,

Seventy is doubly a round number, consisting of *seven* times *ten*. It should not, therefore, be thought extraordinary, if the Babylonish captivity should not have continued exactly seventy years ; tho' it was foretold to be so.

The number seven occurs perpetually in the Revelation. There are seven seals, seven trumpets, seven thunders, and seven vials, as well as seven churches, and seven spirits of God. If these seals, trumpets, thunders, or vials, represent wars, or calamities of any kind, it will be sufficient if we find in the history of the periods referred to a succession of such calamities of some continuance, tho' the number of them should not be exactly seven. If we see that the end or general catastrophe was foreseen, and foretold, we should be satisfied.

A *third part* of a thing, as of the earth, of a city, of the sea, &c, is said to be affected by certain calamities. In this case, all that we can reasonably expect is to find that the calamity was of considerable, tho' indefinite, extent.

The number *time, times, and half a time*, or *forty two months*, or *twelve hundred and sixty days*, which occur both in Daniel and the Revelation, is of the nature of a whole number ; and may not correspond with exactness to just twelve hundred and sixty years, but the nearest half time, or the nearest month of years.

Still less can we expect such a number as *two thousand,*
three ,

three hundred, during which the temple is to remain polluted, to be literally true.

2. Highly figurative and hyberbolical language is allowed in common speech or writing, but much more in poetry and prophecy. Thus the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars, as well as earthquakes, may represent revolutions in states. And *blood to the horses bridles* &c. may only signify great slaughter &c.

3. Allowance should also be made for the analogy of the images in which the prophecies are delivered. Thus because the image of a man in Nebuchadnezzar's dream has, of course, *ten toes*, the last part of the fourth empire is said to be divided into ten parts or kingdoms. But if the real number should be found not to be exactly ten, but a little more or less, it is all that we can reasonably expect.

In like manner, because two witnesses are required by the laws of Moses to establish a fact in a court of judicature, those who bear their testimony against the corruption of religion in the time of the great apostacy are said to be *two*. But there may be any number short of a majority of the people. So because dead bodies will not remain longer than three or four days before they become insufferably offensive, the bodies of these witnesses are said to be unburied that space of time; but it may be any time that shall be deemed *short* with respect to the object and the occasion.

4. The great events which are the subjects of prophecy may require a considerable time from the commencement to the full accomplishment of them. In

this case, it is not improbable but the time mentioned in the prophecy may be that of the commencement only, and at that commencement it may be impossible to imagine the conclusion. Thus, if the present commotions in Europe should eventually lead to those glorious times which is the subject of so many prophecies, and which is called by Daniel *the kingdom of heaven*, the time fixed for it more than two thousand years ago may be now come; tho' the happy conclusion be at a considerable distance. Thus, at the mention of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, *Rev. xi, 15*, it is said, *There were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* tho' not one of the vials (all of which announced great calamities introductory to that happy state of things) was then poured out.

5. Hardly any of the greater prophecies recorded in the scriptures were fully understood at the time of their delivery. Tho' the duration of the Egyptian bondage was revealed to Abraham, it does not appear that their deliverance was at all expected at the time in which it took place.

Of the many events foretold by Daniel, to some of which dates are annexed, not one of them was known to be accomplished till the prophecy was fulfilled. Clearly as we now see, in the eleventh chapter, the history of the kings of Syria and Egypt till the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, we have no evidence of any Jew being able to say, from that account, what would take place with respect to either of those two kingdoms till a subsequent period

period. The only exception to this observation is that of the Jews in the time of Alexander the Great, showing him the prophecies of Daniel relating to his conquest of the Persian empire not then completed.

No prophecy has so many notes of time annexed to it, as that in the ninth of Daniel which relates to the Messiah; and yet the Jews about the time of Christ had only a general expectation of his coming. No person pretended to say with precision when it would be; and this general expectation continued more than a century.

The same is the case with respect to the Revelation. We now see pretty clearly the correspondence of many events, in a long series, with the predictions concerning them; but none of them were foretold by any christian before they happened, except that of the termination of the Turkish conquests by Bishop Lloyd; and many are of opinion, that tho' the event justified his conjecture, he was not right in the interpretation of the prophecy.

Where the language of prophecy has been the clearest imaginable, some prejudice has frequently interfered to prevent the understanding of it, it was not possible for Jesus to have foretold his own death and resurrection more plainly than he did; and yet none of the apostles expected any such thing: Being persuaded that he was to be a king, and to triumph over all his enemies, they thought his language was to be understood in some figurative sense, and that he could not mean a literal death and resurrection.

Let not us, then, affect to be wiser than those who have gone before us. The general nature of the great and happy event, which is to complete the whole scheme of prophecy, is sufficiently indicated to excite our most joyful expectation ; but of the *particulars* we must be content to remain ignorant till the great event shall take place. The kingdom of God, and of Christ, and the reign of the Saints, present pleasing ideas to the mind ; but what kind of kingdom this will be, who are to be the subjects of it, or in what manner it is to be administered, *we have no knowledge at all ; and when it shall take place, it may excite our surprize, as well as our admiration and joy.*

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

DANIEL.

DANIEL was one of the Jewish captives, carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the time of Jehoiakim. He was of the royal family, but in what relation to any of their kings is not said. Josephus speaks of him as one of the greatest of their prophets; saying that he fixed the time for the accomplishment of his predictions, which had not been done by the preceding prophets. For tho' Isaiah, and others, foretold the restoration of the Jews, and the great events which will accompany it, they do not give any note of the time, or mention any intermediate event by which to direct our expectation of it.

Daniel speaking the Chaldee language, some parts of this book, especially those which relate to that country, are written in that language, and the rest in Hebrew. But both languages being probably equally familiar to him, it might be a matter of indifference to him, in which of the two languages he wrote. He must have lived to a great age, as seventy years intervened between the first and last of his predictions, and he could not have been less than twenty at the first of them.

It does not appear that any person objected to the authenticity of this book of Daniel before Porphyry, who lived in the third century after Christ, and he did

it principally on account of the remarkable clearness of the predictions till the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and their obscurity afterwards. But admitting what is not true, that the remark is well founded, it is no proof of his charge. Besides, there can hardly be any doubt but that this book, as well as all the other canonical books of Jewish scripture, was translated into Greek before that time; and some of the clearest of the prophecies relate to times subsequent to that of Antiochus, and even those of Porphyry himself.

Josephus says that the book of Daniel was shewn to Alexander the Great when he was at Jerusalem, and either this, or something equally extraordinary, seems to be necessary to account for the degree of favour that he shewed the Jews, after being highly exasperated against them for their refusing to supply his army with corn during the siege of Tyre; when that part of the country had been used to be supplied from Judea.

Our Saviour refers to Daniel as a prophet, just as he does to Isaiah, or any other of the prophets; and no Jew appears ever to have entertained a doubt of the genuineness of the book ascribed to him. Additions have been made to this book, as may be seen in the *Apocrypha*; but they are evidently spurious, and none of them are so much as mentioned by Josephus, tho' he either expressly quotes, or alludes to, every part of that which is in our canon. Indeed, it does not appear that any attempt was ever made to introduce any book whatever into the Jewish canon, after it was formed, which was prior to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes;

books

and considering the great veneration in which these books were held by them, no such attempt could possibly have succeeded. But having elsewhere written largely in defence of the authenticity of this book, I shall not enlarge upon it in this place.

Ch. I. This chapter contains an account of Daniel and his friends antecedent to that of any of his prophecies.

1. The third year of Jehoiakim is supposed to correspond to the 606 B. C ; but deducting ten years, (as I think myself authorized to do, for reasons that will be found in the *Dissertations prefixed to my Harmony of the Evangelists*,) from the reign of Xerxes, which is commonly said to have been twenty one, it will be 596 B. C. two years before the commencement of the proper reign of Nebuchadnezzar ; so that as Josephus rates from Berosus, he must have reigned two years along with his father ; or else he may be called in this place *king of Babylon*, because he was so presently after. This was nineteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem by this king. Jeremiah makes the fourth year of Jehoiakim the first of Nebuchadnezzar. Ch. xxv, 1.

2. It was usual with the heathens to ascribe success in war to the favour of their gods, and to place the trophies of their victories in their temples. Thus when the ark was taken by the Philistines, they carried it to the temple of Dagon. Shinar was the original name of the territory in which Babylon was built.

3. From Daniel and his companions being committed

ted to the care of the master of the eunuchs, it has been taken for granted that they had been made eunuchs, tho' this is no where expressly said to be the case. Since Isaiah however, tells Hezekiah, Ch. xxxix, that some of his posterity would be made eunuchs in the palaces of the kings of Babylon, the supposition is not improbable.

8. Besides the probability that some of the king's provision might consist of meats prohibited by the laws of Moses, it was, no doubt, in some measure, consecrated to the gods that he worshipped ; all the heathens having begun their meals with some act of their religion, especially libations to their gods. The Jews never eat or drank without some form of acknowledgment to God, as the giver of every thing.

17. A great part of the learning of the wise men of the East, by whatever names they were distinguished, consisted in the interpretation of omens. Daniel had, no doubt, been taught these things, and among them the interpretation of dreams, which was no small article in the account, whether he laid more or less stress on it. But the visions contained in this book were all of a very different nature, being truly supernatural.

19. It is not uncommon, even at this day, in the East, to educate some slaves with great care, and then to put them in places of the greatest trust. Having no person to look up to but their master, the greatest confidence is reposed in them. And notwithstanding the contempt with which eunuchs are generally regarded, they have often had the greatest influence in affairs
of

able and significant of them, were by them ascribed to of state. As they have no families of their own, they are no objects of jealousy. They are generally employed in offices in the princes household.

Ch. II. This chapter contains an account of a very remarkable dream of Nebuchadnezzar, by which was signified the rise and fall of four great empires, and their being succeeded by a different state of things called *the kingdom of heaven*. This vision contains the outline of all the prophecies in this book. An account of many more particulars relating to them will be found in those that follow.

2. These were four classes into which those who applied to the Chaldean literature were divided; but it is not possible, at this distance of time to distinguish their different professions. It was expected of some, if not of all of them, that they should be able to give the king the information he wanted.

3. Tho' he had forgotten the particulars of the dream, it had made a very strong impression on his mind. He was much disturbed by it, and concluded that it must have been of great importance.

5. It appears very unreasonable in the king to require that these wise men should both tell him his dream and interpret it. But many of the antients, and no doubt, these Chaldeans, pretended not only to have communications with superior beings, but to be able by means of incantations, powerful words as they called them, to command their assistance, even against their wills, and since all dreams, especially the more remark-

able

the agency of superior beings, it must, according to them, have been in their power to inform them concerning the dream itself, as well as the meaning of it.

These wise men probably lived a kind of collegiate life, and were maintained at the public expence ; and the threat implies that the buildings which had been appropriated to their use would be demolished, and an end put to the institution.

9. He seems to have been apprehensive that if they did not explain the prediction very soon, the event predicted might in the mean time take place, so that the interpretation would come too late.

11. That is, beings of a higher class than any to whom they had access. For it was only the inferior order of gods whose assistance they thought they could command.

13. Daniel and his companions appear to have been classed with these wise men, tho' it is not said that they were present when the rest were summoned on this occasion. They might, however have been present, but not being instructed by God, they had no more to say at that time than the rest.

18. Daniel and his friends knowing that they could do nothing without the assistance of God, communicated in a supernatural manner, applied to him, as the sole maker and director of all things, not by incantations, which they knew could have no effect, but by humble prayer. What the Chaldeans did we are not told. Had the king remembered his dream, these Chaldeans would, no doubt, have given some interpretation or other

ther of it, according to their rules. This would probably have satisfied the king, and nothing more would have been heard of it. We see, therefore, the wisdom of providence in his forgetting the particulars of the dream, and only retaining a general impression made by it.

35. This vision clearly announced a succession of four empires, and after them another state of things exceedingly different from them, but of a nature to supply their place. No regard need to be paid to the properties of the different metals, or their relative value, any more than to the form of the statue into which they entered.

38. The first of these empires, which then existed, was that of Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar then reigned, on the greatness of which, perhaps by way of compliment, Daniel enlarges.

39. What the two next empires would be we are not told, but they were evidently the Persian and the Macedonian: As they were not, with respect to extent, or any other property that we know of, inferior to the Babylonian, it is probable that all we are to understand by the phrase, is that they would rise next after that of Babylon, which is all that the Arabic version makes of it.

40. This can be no other than the Roman empire, which succeeded the Macedonian; and with respect to power, extent, and duration, it was greatly superior to any of the preceding three. The reason why these four empires, and no others, are noticed in this prophecy

phency, no doubt was that the Jews were subject to them all. The Turks also conquered Palestine, but not while the Jews were in it; so that this empire bears no particular relation to them as all the other four did. They are, however, probably alluded to in another view in a subsequent vision.

41. Tho' this image, being that of a man, necessarily terminates in ten toes, it is not said in this place that exactly ten kingdoms would arise out of the fourth empire; but only that it would be divided, and weakened by the division, the materials of which it then consisted being heterogeneous, and incapable of a proper union; and to this corresponds the last state of the Roman empire, especially in the West, which was occupied by the Northern nations. And these kingdoms of Goths, Vendals, &c. were properly parts of the empire, because they were, at least in general, first employed by the Roman emperors, and permitted to settle within the bounds of the empire, tho' they afterwards became independent of it. Thus the Goths under Theodoric had the leave of the emperor of Constantinople to conquer Italy, and the principal of these Northern nations became so far Roman, that they adopted the Roman language; the Italian, French, and Spanish languages being only a corrupted Latin; and they also adopted in a great measure the Roman laws, and retain the principles of them to this day.

After the Romans admitted many of the Northern nations to the rights of citizenship, and received them into their armies, their antient discipline became relaxed, and they no longer retained their former superiority

riority over other nations in that respect. Besides, the manners of those nations were exceedingly dissimilar to those of the Romans ; so that they never could coalesce, and form one uniform people. Jerom, who lived in the times in which these northern nations settled in the empire, says in his commentary on this prophecy.

“ The fourth kingdom which plainly belongs to the Romans, is the iron that breaketh and subdueth all things ; but his feet and toes are part of iron and part of clay, which is most manifestly proved at this time.

“ For as in the beginning nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker ; since both in civil wars, and against divers nations, we want the assistance of other barbarous nations.” *Newton on the Prophecies*, Vol. I. p. 387.

44. The state of things signified by the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, called *the kingdom of heaven*, which is to continue forever, is, no doubt, the same that is announced by Isaiah, and other prophets, as to take place in the *last times*, when the Jews will be restored to their own country, and universal peace will prevail ; whereas during the four empires the world was laid waste by war.

This kingdom of heaven is to take its rise in the course of the last of these empires, or during the existence of the image, all the parts of which are represented as standing, till on the dissolution of the last, the whole was overthrown. By this little stone being cut out of the mountain without hands, was perhaps signified that the elements of which this kingdom would be

be formed, would be inconsiderable at the first, and would owe its origin not to the hands, or power of man, but to that of God only. Thus the bodies which we are to have after the resurrection are said 2 Cor. v, 1, to be *a building not made with hands*, and the same is said of the heavenly tabernacle, Heb. ix, 11—24. This was the case with respect to christianity. In its rise, it owed nothing to the power or policy of man, which were hostile to it; and the principles of this religion, under the directions of Christ its head, will, on his second coming, be the means of overturning all such empires as the preceding, and of introducing some infinitely better state of things in their place.

This prophecy contains an important addition to the knowledge we were before in possession of respecting the future state of the world; and the mode in which it is conveyed was, in a great measure, if not wholly, new, viz. by an emblematical representation, accompanied with an explanation. Nebuchadnezzar had only seen the image, but as he recollected it to be the same that Daniel described, Daniel must have seen the same; but in what manner the interpretation was suggested to him we are not told. It was probably in the same manner in which the subsequent visions were explained to him, viz. by the interposition of an angel.

46. This prostration was a mark of the greatest respect and reverence that could be paid to any person, and from so great a king was, indeed, very extraordinary; but not more than was natural after such a conviction, with which his mind was then impressed, of the
inti-

intimate access that Daniel had to a Being who could tell what had passed in his own mind, which was a sufficient pledge of the truth of the great predictions with which it was accompanied. The offering of incense and sweet odours is common in the East at the conclusion of a visit. Had this ceremony been any thing like *divine honour*, no doubt Daniel would have rejected it.

47. The conviction of the superiority of the God of Daniel to those that he had worshipped was unavoidable, but it did not follow that they were no gods, and therefore, it was consistent with his continuing an idolater as he had been before.

49. Daniel, having a more general inspection of the affairs of the province, continued near the person of the king; while his three friends administered the government under him. Or, perhaps, the office which was at first conferred upon him was, at his request transferred to them, while he took another, which gave him freer access to the king. This was great preferment for so young a man as Daniel must then have been; for it was very soon after he was first presented to the king, and therefore he could not have been more than about twenty years old.

Ch. III. The six first chapters of this book are historical, relating to transactions concerning the kings of Babylon, and the rest contain accounts of visions seen by Daniel himself. In this chapter we have an account of the erection of a great image, no doubt of some of the gods that were worshipped in Chaldea, which all persons were required to fall down before, and of the

miraculous deliverance of Daniel's three friends, who were thrown into a furnace for their disobedience.

1. It is not said in the Hebrew copy of this book, at what time this transaction happened, but in the version of the Seventy, and others, it is said to have been in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, which was the year in which he took Jerusalem. This success he might consider as a proof of the superiority of his gods to that of the Jews, and being a long time after his vision, and the acknowledgement which it drew from him, the impression might be in a great measure worn off. Besides, he might, according to the idea of all the heathens, acknowledge the superiority of one god, and yet insist upon the worship of others.

If this statue was only overlaid with gold it was sufficient to justify this account of it. But Diodorus Siculus mentions a statue found in the temple of Belus, when Xerxes plundered it, that was forty cubits high, and all of massy gold. This might be the statue, and the greater height of this might be owing to the pedestal on which it was raised.

5. It is not easy, at this distance of time, to ascertain the nature of these different instruments. The names of some of them very much resemble Greek words. But as the Greeks borrowed their musical instruments from other nations, they might take their names also; or a Greek copier might, through inadvertence, insert a Greek name for a Hebrew or Chaldean one. As there are no Grecisms in the phraseology of the book, it could not have been written by a Greek. This
single

the circumstance, therefore, is far from amounting to proof of any want of authenticity in the work.

6. Burning alive appears from Jer. xxix. 22. not to have been an uncommon mode of putting to death at Babylon.

7. It is rather remarkable that no mention should be made of Daniel on this occasion; but he might have been absent on business. He afterwards shewed himself sufficiently ready to stand forth, at any risk, as a worshipper of the one true God. If any person had forged this book in his name, he would certainly have brought him forward on this occasion.

23. Add from the LXX and the Vulgate, *And they walked in the midst of the flame praising God and blessing the Lord.* In the genuine LXX, lately printed at Rome it is, *And the fire proceeding from the furnace burned the men who had bound them with fetters, who were with Azariah, and killed them, but they were preserved.* Then follows their song inserted in the Apocrypha.

24. There is evidently a chasm at this verse. For nothing is said of the cause of the king's astonishment, and in this place we find in the Seventy, and all the ancient versions, what is commonly called *the song of the three children*, as it is by no means improper on the occasion, it might have been in the original, and have been omitted by the person who took the present copy, except the circumstance of the flame of the furnace destroying the persons who threw the three Jews into it,

25. The expression *son of God*, seems to be equivalent to that of *angel*, as beings in peculiar favour with God. But the heathens in general thought that some of their gods were descended from others by ordinary generation. Such is the system of the Hindoos, and such was probably that of the Chaldeans and other eastern nations.

29. This great miracle did not effect the conversion of the king, or of the Babylonians, from the worship of idols, tho' it produced an acknowledgment of the superiority of the God of the Jews.

30. When these three men were sentenced to be burned alive, they were, of course deprived of their employments, and therefore it was necessary to reinstate them:

Ch. IV. In this chapter we have an account of another vision of Nebuchadnezzar, but it relates wholly to himself. Of the date of it there is no intimation given, but it was probably towards the end of his reign. The whole seems to be a literal copy of a public act of the king, and it is in the Chaldee language.

13. By *watcher* must be meant what is more commonly called an *angel*, supposed to watch over the affairs of men. God himself has a similar appellation when he is called Ps. cxxi, 4, the *keeper of Israel*.

16. Here is a departure from the language of the allegory. The tree is no longer a tree, but a man, with a heart, which is changed from that of a man to that of a brute beast.

29. As a whole year had elapsed since his dream, the impression it had made upon him would be much diminished.

ished ; and as Daniel gave him reason to hope that the punishment might be mitigated by his reformation, he might presume that he had nothing to apprehend.

30. Nebuchadnezzar was not the original founder of Babylon, but he greatly enlarged and beautified it; and without doubt it was the most magnificent city of which we have any account. It was built in the form of a square, and was more than forty five miles in circuit. The walls were fifty cubits high, and so broad that six chariots might be drawn on it abreast. The river Euphrates ran through it, and over it was a bridge a furlong in length, and at each end of it was a magnificent palace.

33. As this punishment was supernatural, it is not necessary to look for any natural disease to resemble it. Whatever it was, it was accompanied with insanity ; but no insane persons feed on grass. This is the property of a real brute animal, and his body becoming at the same time hairy like that of an ox, it is evident that a total change of constitution had taken place in him, and that he was a real brute in the shape of a man.

37. These are excellent reflexions, expressed with peculiar force and sublimity.

Ch. V. This chapter contains an account of the last king of Babylon, here called Belshazzar ; but Herodotus calls him Labynitus, and other historians Nabonadius. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son, called by Jeremiah Evilmerodach, who by Nitocris, a woman of excellent understanding and character, bore him this son, so that he was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. Evilmerodach reigned only two years, and

was succeeded by Nergalassar, who had married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and conspired against him, but he was killed in a battle against Cyrus. His son Laborosoarchod, succeeded him; and after reigning nine months was murdered by his subjects, and thus made room for Belshazzar the last king of Babylon. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Jeremiah, Ch. xxvii 7, that *all nations should serve Nebuchadnezzar, and his son, and his son's son*; and with his grandson the empire terminated.

1. This was an annual festival, of which Cyrus, who was besieging the city, being apprized, took advantage by entering the city in the night, having before diverted the course of the river.

3. The history of these vessels is remarkable. After being taken from the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and used in this manner at Babylon, they were restored by Cyrus. When Jerusalem was taken by Titus, some of them were carried to Rome to adorn his triumph. Thence they were taken by Genferic when he took Rome, and carried to Africa, but being recovered by Justinian when he conquered Africa, he sent them as a present to the church of Jerusalem. What became of them afterwards is not known.

6. We cannot well imagine any appearance more terrifying than this, and the effect of it is most naturally described. Having heard, as he must, of the great superiority of the God that was worshiped at Jerusalem in the time of his grandfather, he was, no doubt, alarmed at this appearance, as a mark of his displeasure. This feast was probably held in the quadrangle of the
place

palace in the open air, the whole space being illuminated according to the custom of the East, by a great lamp in the centre ; and the writing would appear on the wall that was opposite to the place where the king was. See *Harmer's Observations*, Vol. I, p. 191.

10. This queen was Nitocris above mentioned, the mother of the reigning prince. In the East the mothers of the princes have always great influence.

13. Daniel had probably been displaced at the death of Nebuchadnezzar ; and having lived in retirement afterwards, he might not be personally known to the king.

At the death of a king of Babylon, it is said that the Magi, with whom Daniel was classed, were displaced, as also the physicians ; those for not having prevented the death, and the other for not having predicted it.

22. The freedom and dignity of this address to the king are not a little remarkable ; but the great terror in which the king was, the favour of the queen, and his own great age and former distinctions, would naturally give him boldness. Besides in his present state of mind the king would not be disposed to resent any thing.

25. *Mene* is not repeated in the antient versions.

These words, or the radicals of them, could not have been altogether unknown to learned Chaldeans, for they are found in their own language. But the character in which they were written might not be known to them, or if they could read the words, they might not be able to affix any meaning to them, as they

are unconnected, and form no complete sentence. The interpretation must have been suggested to Daniel by immediate inspiration.

27. It is customary in Indostan to weigh the monarch on the anniversary of his birth day, to observe whether he has gained or lost weight. If he has gained weight, it is a subject of rejoicing.

29. If the king had any faith in this warning, it may appear extraordinary that he should have thought of doing this honour to Daniel at so critical a time. But no particular time was mentioned for the fulfilment of this prediction, and he was bound by his word. And it is customary on visits of ceremony in the East, to present those who are introduced to the prince with garments, differing in value &c. according to their rank.

30. At this very time the army of Cyrus entered the city by the channel of the river, the passages to which were left unguarded.

31. He that is here called Darius, was probably the same that is called Cyaxares by the Greek historians. He was the son of Astyages, whose daughter was Cyrus's mother.

Ch. VI. This is the last historical chapter in this book. It contains an account of the deliverance of Daniel himself from the lions, similar to that of his companions from the fiery furnace. On the conquest of Babylon, Darius the Mede, or Cyaxares, under whom probably Cyrus commanded, acted as the sovereign. Some suppose it was by the appointment of Cyrus. But as the Medes were originally the more powerful nation,

on, their princes probably had the pre-eminence after their union with the Persians till the death of this Darius, after which Cyrus, who had married his daughter, succeeded to the supreme command.

3. The preceding history easily accounts for the favour that was shewn to Daniel, with whose character and merit neither Darius nor Cyrus could be unacquainted. The envy of the princes of the country to this stranger, and their insidious endeavours to supplant and destroy him, are natural enough.

8. Diodorus Siculus observes that when any decree had the seal of the kings of Persia, it was not in their power to change it. The same appears in the history of Esther.

10. The usual times of prayer to the pious Jews was at nine in the morning, at noon, and three in the afternoon ; the first and last being the times of the morning and evening sacrifice in the temple. It had, no doubt, been Daniel's custom to pray in this manner, and he would not depart from it, to whatever danger it might expose him. To pray with the face towards Jerusalem was agreeable to the intimation given by Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the temple. To pray so as to be seen, may look like ostentation. But to this day in the East, all persons perform acts of religion without concealment. The Mahometans never fail to recite their prayers at the prescribed hours, wherever they are.

16. The anxiety of the king to save Daniel appears in the strongest manner.

17 The

17. The king perhaps apprehended that these enemies of Daniel might take some other method of destroying him, if this scheme should fail.

21. This was the usual mode of saluting a prince.

24. It was usual in the East on extraordinary occasions, as that of rebellion, to destroy not only the offenders themselves, but all the members of their family, and their nearest relations. Thus the sons of Hamar were hanged as well as the father by Ahafuerus. The laws of Moses were more equitable. They say, Deut. xxiv, 6. *The father shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers.*

36. This is similar to the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, but it did not amount to a renunciation of idolatry. It was only an acknowledgment of the superiority of the God of Daniel to other gods.

37. Daniel must have been a very old man, at least ninety, before he died.

Ch. VII. We have now closed the historical part of this book, and enter upon that which is purely prophetic, consisting of visions seen by Daniel himself, interpreted by an angel. They are four in all, and in each of them, we have some farther information concerning the state of things that was to precede the great and happy catastrophe announced by the former prophets, and also some particulars concerning *that* which were not communicated to them.

3. The four great empires, which were represented by the parts of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, are here represented by four beasts; and as the destruction of them was there said to be occasioned by the

the falling of a stone on the feet of the image, and that stone became a great mountain filling the whole earth, these beasts are said to be slain, and their bodies thrown into a fire, while a person in the form of a man receives from God a kingdom that was to continue for ever.

4. This first beast, which resembled a lion, and had eagle's wings, no doubt, represents the Babylonish empire, the lion denoting its strength, and the wings the rapidity of its conquests. But its acquiring the heart of a man, instead of that of a lion, signified that, in process of time, its force and ferocity would be greatly lessened.

5 This second beast, which resembled a bear, signified the Medo-Persian empire ; and by its raising itself on one side (if that be the right rendering) may be intimated the ascendancy that would be acquired by the Persians over the Medes. The three tusks in its mouth denote instruments of destruction, besides its own natural teeth, and these may mean Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt, which the Persians conquered, and the power of which they converted to their own use.

6. This third beast resembling a leopard, must mean the Macedonian empire ; as the extraordinary rapidity of its conquests under Alexander is denoted by its four wings, and its division into four parts after the death of Alexander by its four heads.

7. The fourth beast, the likeness of which to any other is not expressed, must mean the Roman empire, which succeeded the Macedonian. A sufficient indication is given of its superior power by its fierce aspect, its great strength, and its iron teeth. It is said to be different

ferent from any of the preceding beasts ; and the form of the Roman government was remarkably so, having changed from kingly to consular, and imperial, besides other intermediate changes. The ten horns denote the division of the empire into ten parts, corresponding to the ten toes in Nebuchadnezzar's image.

8. This is the first intimation of this extraordinary power, so unlike any other of which we have had a view given us before. It arises among the ten kingdoms, three of which are removed to make way for it. This power is, no doubt, the Papal, and the three that were removed by or for it, were probably the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of Lombardy, and the city and territory of Rome. There is some uncertainty in the history of the *triple crown* worn by the popes ; but it must probably have had its origin from the idea of representing three states, whatever they were. This horn having *eyes like a man* signifies its great sagacity; and no princes have been so polite as the popes, and its *mouth speaking great things*, happily expresses its extraordinary pretensions to power, temporal and spiritual.

In the interpretation of the vision, v. 25, it is added that it had *power to wear out the saints of the Most High*, and no princes have been so great persecutors as the popes. It is said also to *change times and laws*, and this is literally true of the popes. All the festivals of the church, numerous as they are, have been fixed by their authority; and they have not only changed the institutions of men, but those of God also, in their regulations concerning marriage, and other things.

9. This

9. This should be rendered *till the thrones were erected*, and prepared for the reception of the judge.

After a sufficient time preparation is made to judge this extraordinary power. A throne being placed for the Divine Being as supreme judge, with every circumstance of splendour and dignity. The throne and the wheels under it, have the appearance of fire. This is an allusion to the chairs of state in antient times, which had wheels under them, probably because they were heavy, and required to be moved occasionally from place to place. The opening of books was another circumstance attending courts of justice.

11. By the sentence of this awful court, this last mentioned beast is ordered not only to be slain, but his body thrown into the fire, to denote utter destruction.

12. This was a more severe fate than that of the former beasts. Their dominion was taken away, but they were allowed to exist; signifying perhaps that, tho' the Babylonians, Persians, and Macedonians, lost their power over other nations, they were still governed by their laws, in a manner similar to what they had been before; whereas the last empire is not succeeded by any other like itself, but all traces of every thing of the kind are removed, to make way for a totally new state of things incompatible with them.

14. Here we see the dominion that had been taken from the last of these empires given by the Supreme Being himself to the *son of man*, no doubt the Messiah, to whom will be subjected all the subjects of the four preceding empires; and this new state of things is to have no end.

18 Here

18. Here it is said not that any one individual person, as he who is called the *son of man* but the *saints* in general shall possess the kingdom, no doubt under the Messiah as their head; and this is agreeable to the language of our Saviour and the apostles.

25. There is no doubt but that this expression signifies *a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and an half*, or reckoning a year for a day, a period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years. The same number, but sometimes under different forms, as forty two months, &c. occurs in the book of Revelation, as the period of the prevalence of an anti-christian power. The only difficulty is to ascertain the commencement of this period. Here it seems to be the beginning of the existence of the tyranny of the power represented by the little horn, which rises some time after the ten horns. These may be said to have appeared at or soon after the fall of the western empire, which was in A. D. 475, tho' some think that the empire really ended with Valentinian III, in A. D. 455. And this emperor, in conjunction with Theodosius II. in the East, gave the popes that jurisdiction over other churches which they ever after exercised, tho' the title of *universal bishop* was not given to them before A. D. 606. If to the former of these dates we add one thousand two hundred and sixty, we have the year 1715; but tho' at this time, which was that of the death of Lewis XIV. there was a visible diminution of the power of the popes, it was not sufficiently so to make a remarkable era. But as this power rose by degrees, it may be presumed that

its

its declension will proceed in the same gradual manner, tho' its final extinction, may be sudden.

If we take the year 475 from which to reckon the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, we have A. D. 1735 for the termination of them. But as this little horn rose some time after the ten, we may begin to reckon the one thousand two hundred and sixty some time after this ; and at any rate may look for their termination very soon ; and it was not the design of providence to enable us to predict with absolute certainty any event. It is enough if our hopes or fears be kept up by a knowledge of the certainty of an interesting event, and a general idea of the signs of its approach.

There must have been some reason why this remarkable period is divided into *a time, times, and half a time*. The author of an *Essay on Scripture Prophecy*, published in 1724, supposes, p. 107, that the first may correspond to the increase of the papal power, the second to its continuance, and the third to its declension ; the first consisting of three hundred and sixty years, from A. D. 455 to 815, when the emperors lost their negative in the election of a pope ; the second, of seven hundred and twenty years, from that time to A. D. 1535 ; when the reformation was established in Germany, and begun in England, and the last, of one hundred and eighty years, from that time to A. D. 1715, the death of Lewis XIV. And certainly from about that time, the popes have had but little influence in the general politics of Europe, 'which for a long time before they almost guided. Tho' these should not be the dates really

really intended in the prophecy, (and such exactness I believe was not designed) they may not improbably be pretty near the truth; a larger period being allowed for the exercise of this power, a shorter for its rise, and a shorter still for its decline. This appears to me to be as much as this division of the period will authorize us to suppose.

On the whole, this vision gives us much additional insight into future times. It contains the first description of a power hostile to the cause of true religion, the time of its rise, and its duration, nothing of which was indicated in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ch. VIII. The vision of which we have an account in this chapter was two years after the preceding, or in 543 B. C. and from it we have much farther information concerning the three last of the four empires, especially the third and fourth, than was given in the two former.

2. As Daniel was by the river, this can hardly be called a *vision*. It was rather a *trance*, or a state of insensibility with respect to external objects. Elam, or Persia, was at that time subject to the Babylonians, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, tho' it afterwards revolted, and joined the Medes.

3. This ram is said, in the interpretation, v. 20, to be *the king*, or kingdom of *the Medes and Persians*, and Ammianus Marcellinus, a heathen writer, observes that ram's heads and horns were the ensigns of the Persians; and such figures are still to be seen in the ruins of Persepolis. The two horns represent the two kingdoms
which

kingdoms which were afterwards united, that of the Medes being the most powerful at the first, and that of the Persians afterwards.

4. Media and Persia were to the East of Palestine, and they made no conquests in that direction, but in every other.

5. This he goat from the West, is said in the interpretation, v. 21, to be the king, or kingdom, of Greece, and according to Justin a he goat was the emblem of Macedon from the time of king Caranus. It is said that he was directed by a goat where to fix himself, and accordingly in the place where the goat rested he built a town, and called it *Ægæ*, which signifies a goat; and here was the burial place of the kings of Macedonia. The people of Macedon were denominated *Ægeadæ*, or the people of the goat. The great horn between its eyes, is said in the interpretation to be *the first king*, or the kingdom in its first state, under Alexander and his immediate successors. His not touching the ground in his motion denotes the extraordinary rapidity of the Macedonian conquests.

7. This is a happy emblematical description of the completeness, as well as the rapidity, of this conquest. Josephus says that this prophecy, not then fully accomplished, was shewn to Alexander when he was at Jerusalem. Indeed it may be taken for granted, without any external evidence, that a prophecy so easy of interpretation in his favour as this, would be shewn to him; and it would contribute, without his seeing the high-priest in a dream, and his meeting him in his robes (which, however, I see no reason to question) to miti-

gate the anger he had conceived against the Jews. The sudden turn in the mind of this great conqueror with respect to the Jews, can hardly be accounted for without some such circumstances as these.

8. Alexander died suddenly in the height of his power, and not long after his death his generals divided his empire among them; Cassander taking Macedonia and Greece, Lyfimachus Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus Syria and the East, and Ptolemy Egypt.

9. Thus far there is no great difficulty in the interpretation of this prophecy; but commentators differ much with respect to the power represented by the *little horn*, and in general it has been supposed to refer to Antiochus Epiphanes. But two circumstances are very unfavourable to this hypothesis. A horn in these visions never represents an individual king, but always a kingdom, or empire; and this vision is said, v. 17, to relate to *the time of the end*, v. 19 to *the end of the indignation*, probably of the calamities and dispersions of the Jews; and again v. 26, it is said to be *for many days*, expressions which clearly point to a time far beyond that of Antiochus Epiphanes, viz. to the destruction of the power that oppresses the Jews. It must extend to the termination of their sufferings, which continue even to this day. This horn, therefore, must refer either to the Roman empire, or to the papacy, and of the two, I think with bishop Newton, the former best answers to the characters here given.

Instead of *out of them*, this may be rendered *after them*, so that there is no necessity to make this power a branch from any of the others, tho' the Romans coming into

into the East by the way of Greece, are by some considered as, in this vision, arising there. As the Romans came from the West, and the North with respect to Palestine, their conquests extended chiefly to the South and the East, and especially Judea, called *the pleasant land*.

10. The host of heaven, or the stars, in these visions, represent earthly princes, many of whom fell before the Romans.

12. *The prince of the host*, may mean the Messiah, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, and he was put to death by the Romans; or it may signify, in general, the chief of all earthly powers, the people of the Jews; and the rather as by the Romans the country was conquered and laid waste, and the daily sacrifices taken away by the destruction of the temple.

14. *And he said unto him.* A. V.

Here a time is fixed, but in large or round numbers, for the termination of this desolation. It is to be after *two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings*, or days, i. e. so many years; but it is not said from what time they are to be reckoned. We may therefore suppose that it was to be from the time of the vision, or B. C. 543; and then the termination will be in A. D. 1757. But as no number under a hundred is mentioned, it may extend near a century beyond this time. We may, however, be looking for the completion of this remarkable prophecy in our own times.

22. — *Out of his nation.* A. V.

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23 We

23. We have here another circumstance indicating the time in which the power represented by this horn is to rise. It is when transgressions are come to the full, meaning probably, the degeneracy of the Jewish nation, when they were ripe for destruction, and this was the time when the Romans appeared in the East, and the Jews became subject to them. This power is described as equally fierce, haughty, and politic; and so were the Romans.

24. Every thing in this description answers with remarkable clearness to the conquests of the Romans, and especially their destruction of the Jews. The only circumstance unfavourable to this hypothesis is that they are said to be mighty *not by their own power*. This clause, however, is not in the version of Theodotion, which is said to be more exact than that of the Seventy. If it signify the Romans as appearing to come from Greece, it was not the proper power of Greece, but that of a more distant country.

25. The success of the Romans was owing as much to their policy as to their arms. Their conquests were much facilitated by granting the freedom of their city to many of the conquered nations, and thereby incorporating them with themselves. It was by the promise of liberty that they got such an easy possession of Greece, and several other countries, easing them of their former taxes, and permitting them to be governed by their own laws.

The *prince of princes* in this verse, is synonymous to the *prince of the host* in v. 11, and probably means the Messiah, in which case it cannot be applied to any other

other power than the Roman. This power being *broken without hand*, corresponds to the destruction of the image of Nebuchadnezzar, which was by a stone cut *out of a mountain without hands*.

Ch. IX. In this chapter we have a prophecy relating to the state of the Jews from the time of Daniel to their final restoration, which has occasioned more difficulty to interpreters than any other in this book, or any other in the scriptures ; owing, I suspect, to an error in the numbers of our present Hebrew copies.

1: This was 528 B. C. The Darius here mentioned is the Cyaxares of Herodotus, the son of Astyages, whose daughter was Cyrus's mother.

2. The prophecies of Jeremiah here referred to are the following Ch. xxv, 11. *This whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it a perpetual desolation.* Ch. xxix, 10. *Thus saith the Lord, after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place.*

According to this prophecy, the seventy years commence with the desolation of Judea, and therefore must be reckoned from the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, which was in 577 B. C. so that from this time to the year 528, which was the first of Darius, forty nine years of the seventy had elapsed. However, as there was a captivity, tho'

no destruction of the country, and many Jews (among whom was Daniel himself) were carried to Babylon in the fourth year of Jehoiachim, viz. 595. B. C. and then sixty seven of the years had elapsed, he might presume (especially as the divine threatnings were not generally executed with rigour) that the time of their deliverance was at hand. The punishment of the king of Babylon had taken place; and he might think the seventy years of their prosperity coincident with the seventy years of the sufferings of his country. But Daniel does not say what his ideas or expectations on this subject were. He only confesses the sins of his countrymen, and humbly supplicates the divine mercy in their favour.

24. *And seventy and seven times, and sixty two years, to the time of the completion of the war, the desolation shall be taken away in the prevailing of the covenant for many weeks; and in the end of the week shall the sacrifice and libation be taken away, and the abomination of desolation shall be upon the temple unto the end, and there shall be an end of the desolation.* The original LXX.

26.—*And there is no judgment for him, Gr. that is he is condemned unheard.*

27.—*And in the temple shall be the abomination of desolation.* Gr. Vul. and LXX.

The literal rendering of this is *seventy times seventy*. Daniel had enquired concerning the duration of the calamities of his nation. In answer to this he was informed that the whole time of their discipline, which was foretold by Moses, would be long indeed, not merely seventy years, but seventy times as long, not speaking with exactness, tho' it will probably be very nearly

nearly as long from the time of Moses; but an indefinitely long period. And certainly the Babylonish captivity, did not produce effects that are here mentioned, viz. *to finish transgression, and make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, bring an everlasting righteousness, and to seal the vision and prophecy* that is to bring in those happy times when the Israelites would be recovered from all their backslidings, and restored to the peaceable and undisturbed possessions of their own country, which was the great object of the preceding prophecies. However, in order to comfort him with respect to the intermediate time, the angel informs Daniel of some pleasing events, as that of the rebuilding of the city, and the coming of the Messiah, now first announced by that name, before the commencement of a great calamity of much longer duration than the Babylonish captivity.

A great, and indeed an unspeakable, difficulty in the interpretation of this prophecy has been the idea of the necessity of abiding by the numbers in the Hebrew text, according to which only *seventy weeks* of years, or four hundred and ninety years, intervened between the command to restore Jerusalem here mentioned, and the time of the Messiah, and this term is by no means sufficient, if the command was that of Cyrus, or enforced by Darius Hystaspis. They have, therefore, been obliged to reckon from a much later order to rebuild the city, in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when Nehemiah was sent for that purpose. But this was too remote from the time of Daniel viz. near a century, and therefore a time of which he could

not have ~~any~~ knowledge, or suspicion. From this great difficulty we are relieved by a reading preserved in the original translation of the Seventy, now happily recovered, which instead of *seventy*, has *seventy seven weeks, and sixty two years*.

Another difficulty has been occasioned by the opinion that Xerxes reigned twenty one years; whereas it is now pretty evident that he reigned only eleven years, as was first shewn by Mr. Laughlan Taylor, and for which I have advanced additional reasons. Mr. Blayney was the first who availed himself of the numbers in the Seventy, and also to observe that instead of the prophecy saying that the Messiah would be *cut off*, we are at liberty to render the word actively, which will imply that the Messiah *will cut off*, or destroy the Jewish nation; and thus the event predicted will be the desolation of Judea by the Romans, who, as they revenge the cause of the Messiah, may be said to act under him, and by his orders; which is similar to the language of the scriptures in other cases, especially with respect to the Messiah. In the Revelation he is said to do many things which took place in the usual course of things, in which the christian religion was concerned.

As I have formerly given much attention to this remarkable prophecy, and think that I have improved on the interpretation of Mr. Blayney, and have nothing material to add to my former observations on the subject, I shall in this place content myself with introducing my paraphrase of this prophecy, referring my readers to the Dissertations prefixed to my *Harmony of the*

the Gospels for the reasons of all the particulars. It is however since I wrote those Dissertations, that it has occurred to me that the opening of the prophecy does not refer to the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity, but, as I have said, to the much longer period that is to precede their final restoration.

“ The seventy years will suffice for the present captivity of thy nation, a period of seventy times as great will be necessary to expiate all their sins, for the desolation of the country, and the dispersal of the people that was announced by Moses, and before the glorious and happy times of confirmed prosperity and righteousness, foretold by the former prophets, be come.

“ Observe, however, for thy consolation, that from the going forth of the decree to restore Jerusalem, at which the present desolation of seventy years will terminate, to the time that the Messiah shall make his appearance, with a commission from God to preach the glad tidings of the gospel, shall be seventy seven weeks of years, or five hundred and thirty nine years, but that after sixty two years from that decree, the city itself will be rebuilt, and become more and more considerable, even amidst times of distress.”

“ Also, after the same term of years which has been now mentioned, reckoned from the present time, the Messiah, who on his first appearance will be rejected by the Jews, will reject them, and cut off both the city and the sanctuary. And the Romans, whom he will employ to execute his just vengeance, will destroy

“troy the people, and their destruction will be sudden and complete.

“In the last week of this whole term, or the last seven years, preceding A. D. 73, the Messiah will confirm a covenant with many, numbers adhering to his cause, and being rescued by him from the impending destruction. And in the midst of this dreadful work, that is A. D. 70, he will cause the daily sacrifice and meat offering to cease in the utter destruction of the temple and the city. The abomination of desolation will be placed in the temple itself, and an utter and speedy end will be put to the whole of the Jewish constitution.”

Ch. X. We are now come to the last of the prophecies of Daniel, the date of which is the third year of the reign of Cyrus, or B. C. 524, and it is the most circumstantial of any of them, and like all the preceding, it terminates in what are usually called *the last times*, which is of great use in the interpretation of it, in some parts of which there is considerable difficulty, tho’ other parts are so plain as to have given a handle to Porphyry and others, to say that it must have been written after the events.

2. As the time of this vision is said to be long, at this entrance of it, and it concludes with the mention of the restoration of the Jews, and the general resurrection, it cannot relate, as some have maintained, to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes only. Other prophecies of Daniel certainly go beyond this time; and therefore compared with them, such a period must have appeared very short.

-6—Like

6.—*Like the son of man.* A. V.

This is very fimilar to the appearance of Jefus to John in the Revelation. All that can be inferred from it is, that this perfon, whoever he was, appeared very reflendent, and that his voice was loud and awful.

8. This could not have been a proper vifion, tho' it is fo called, but fuch an appearance as that of Jefus to Paul on his way to Damafcus.

10. This hand feems to have been that of a perfon lefs awful in appearance than the former, perhaps the fame that is elfewhere called Gabriel.

13. From this many have inferred the doctrine of particular angels appointed to take care of particular countries. But it may be nothing more than a figurative representation, fuch as that of the prophet Micajah to Jehofaphat, or that in the book of Job, and the meaning may be, that fome thing or other prevented the communication of this vifion during the twenty one days, or three weeks, that Daniel had been fafting.

14. This language is very unfuitable to a prophecy fupposed to extend no farther than the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, after fo many others, which certainly relate to much later times.

20. This angel affumes the character of an advocate of the Jews with the kings of Perfia, who then reigned; but there is an intimation that, when the empire of the Greeks fhould commence, his influence would ceafe. Michael is represented as the friend of the Jewifh nation. In Ch. xii, 1, he is called *the great prince who standeth for the children of Daniel's people.*

Whether

Whether this representation of guardian angels is just, or merely figurative, we cannot tell. Jesus, tho' invisible to us, appeared by several circumstances to interest himself in the affairs of his church in the time of the apostles, and therefore may be supposed to do so now, tho' his interposition does not appear. Also, these events which in the seemingly common course of providence affected the church, are ascribed to his agency, as we see in what he said to Peter concerning John Ch. xxi, 22, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* and in his messages to the seven churches in the Revelation. As angels always appeared in the form of men, they may perhaps be men in the same state with Jesus, and perhaps this Michael may be no other than Moses. But these are merely random thoughts.

Ch. XI. 2. The three kings that were to rise up in Persia, were, no doubt, Cyrus, Cambyfes, and Darius Hyflaspis, and the fourth must be Xerxes, who with an immense army, provided at a prodigious expence, invaded Greece, but the event of the invasion is not mentioned, nor is there any farther account of any kings of Persia.

3. This must mean Alexander the Great, who overthrew the Persian empire.

4. After his death, and that of his immediate descendants, his empire was divided among four of his generals, viz. Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy, as was observed before. But the two first of these kingdoms having no relation to the Jews, nothing
is

is said of them, but only of the two latter, of whom the former, viz. the kings of Syria, are called *the kings of the North* ; and the latter, viz. those of Egypt, *the kings of the South*, because they were thus situated with respect to Judea.

5. The kings of Egypt were very powerful, but not so much so as those of Syria, whose dominions were much more extensive.

6. About seventy years after the death of Alexander, Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, was given in marriage to Antiochus Theos, the king of Syria, with a view to establish a peace between the two kingdoms ; but she was not able to accomplish it. For she, and those who accompanied her, were given into the hands of Laodice, the former wife of Antiochus, who poisoned her. Her son also was destroyed, and presently after her father died, and her husband was poisoned by Laodice.

9. Ptolemy Euergetes, to revenge the death of his sister, sent an army, and conquered a great part of Syria, carrying back with him into Egypt much wealth, and two thousand images of their gods. He returned in order to suppress a sedition in his own country, and he survived Seleucus Callinicus, who died in exile, within four or five years.

10. The sons of Seleucus Callinicus, viz. Seleucus Ceraunus, and Antiochus Magnus, raised a great army, and after the death of Ceraunus (who was slain in the expedition) Antiochus recovered all that Ptolemy had conquered, and then marched into Egypt.

11 But

11. But Ptolemy Philopater marched against him; and at Raphia defeated him, so that it was with much difficulty that Antiochus himself escaped.

12. Being elated with this advantage, Ptolemy behaved with great cruelty to the Jews, but giving himself up to luxury, he soon died.

13. After his death Antiochus came with a great army, consisting of three hundred thousand foot, besides horse, and took possession of Casarea and Palestine.

14. At the same time Philip of Macedon joined with Antiochus against Ptolemy, and his own subjects, irritated at the ill conduct of Agathocles his tutor, were very tumultuous. The Jews also shewed a disposition to break off from Ptolemy, but without effect.

15. For Scopas the general of Ptolemy, during the absence of Antiochus, in his war with Attalus king of Pergamus, severely punished the Jews. After this Antiochus returned, and took Sidon, a city strongly fortified, and other places of strength, in Syria and Palestine, notwithstanding all the opposition that the king of Egypt could make.

16. Thus he was in full possession of Judea, and to secure the allegiance of the Jews, he confirmed their privileges. For instead of being *consumed*, or injured, according to the common translation, the original may be rendered *finished* or *completed*, that is made prosperous, or flourishing.

17. But being alarmed at the Romans taking part with the young king of Egypt, powerful as he was, he sought peace on equal terms, and hoped by the marriage

age of his daughter Cleopatra to gain by artifice what he despaired of doing by force ; but in this he did not succeed.

18. In order to oppose the progress of the Romans, Antiochus marched into Greece ; but the Roman general Scipio met and defeated him at Magnesia ; so that he was obliged to make peace on the most humiliating terms.

19. He then returned to his own capital, and going into the East for the purpose of amassing wealth to pay his tribute, he was killed as he was plundering the rich temple of Elymais.

20. His son and successor Seleucus Philopater, employed himself wholly in raising money to pay the tribute to the Romans, and he was soon put to death by the treachery and ambition of Heliodorus his treasurer.

22. The elder brother being at Rome, the younger, viz. Epiphanes, by the fair promises he made to the Romans and Syrians, and by gaining the king of Pergamus to his interest, succeeded to the throne, and both Heliodorus, who had seized the kingdom, and Demetrius, whom the Romans had agreed to accept for Epiphanes, were excluded.

24. After his treaties with the Romans, and the king of Pergamus, from small beginnings he became very powerful ; and being very wealthy, he was more munificent than any of his predecessors. He then formed a design against Egypt, sending Apollonius to be a spy on that kingdom, on the pretence of assisting at the coronation of the young king.

26 The

26. The two kings coming to a rupture, Epiphanes succeeded so far as to take Ptolemy prisoner, and seize on the whole kingdom of Egypt except Alexandria, Ptolemy having been destroyed by his governor and servants.

27. The two kings, being now together, appeared to be on good terms. They, however, endeavoured to deceive one another, but neither of them gained their purpose. For the cessation of hostilities was not yet come.

28. Being loaded with much plunder, especially from the temples of Egypt, Antiochus went to Jerusalem, and after a siege he took it, slew forty thousand of the inhabitants, and plundered the temple; and leaving a person of a cruel disposition for a governor of the place, he returned to Syria.

29. The two brothers, Philometer and Physcon, agreeing to reign jointly, which disappointed the views of Epiphanes, he returned with a great army, but this expedition was not so successful as the former.

30. For ambassadors from Rome, meeting him in Egypt, ordered him peremptorily to leave the country, and with this he was obliged to comply; and being assisted by some apostate and profligate Jews, he wreaked his vengeance on the whole nation.

31. By his order Apollonius went with twenty thousand men to Jerusalem, and taking advantage of the sabbath, on which the Jews at that time would not defend themselves, plundered the city and the temple, and caused a total suppression of the daily sacrifices, and all the

the exercises of the Jewish religion ; after which he dedicated the temple to Jupiter Olympius, and erected his statue on the altar of burnt offering.

Thus far this prophecy concerning the transactions of the kings of Syria and Egypt resembles a history, and we are obliged to Porphyry and Jerom, who had access to more histories than are now extant, for collecting facts which enable us to verify it so completely as it is now in our power to do. But this interruption of the exercise of the Jewish religion was for so short a time, that it could not deserve to be mentioned in comparison with that which was afterwards occasioned by the Romans, and therefore the later and longer interruption, which continues to this day, must be that which was intended in the prophecy. And from this time no farther notice is taken of the kings of Syria, or Egypt, the transactions of which did not affect the Jews, but those of a much greater power, which from this time overwhelmed them both, and brought upon the Jews infinitely more calamity than any other nation had ever done. To this very passage our Saviour refers, as not having been fulfilled in his time. Matt. 24. *When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, &c.*

That the reference to the Romans begins at this verse 31, will be more probable, if we render it, with Sir Isaac Newton, *After him arms, or a strong power shall stand up*; for this sense the original will bear, and they (not Antiochus) shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, meaning the temple which proved to be a very strong fortress, and shall take away the daily sacri-

fice, placing in the temple itself, the Roman standards, which being objects of heathen worship, as well as implements of war, are justly denominated *the abomination of desolation*, or the abomination that maketh desolate.

33. This applies very well to the case of the christians, who from this time may be considered as the people of God, or those who *know their God*. All methods were made use of, every mode of seduction, as well as force, to induce the christians to conform to the heathen worship, but they bore persecution with great constancy three hundred years, and in this time instructed, or converted, great numbers.

35. The accession of Constantine was a great relief to the christians, and many now professed themselves such from worldly motives. But this state of tranquility did not continue long. Persecution was renewed on various pretences, and in various forms, in which many as is always the case, fell, while others were improved by the discipline: and this has continued, with more or less severity, to the present time, which there is reason to think is not far from the *time of the end*, or what is emphatically called *the latter days*, by the preceding prophets. This phrase alone, is a sufficient indication that this prophecy respects a very late period, much later than the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

37. In these verses the persecuting power is farther described, and the description in all its parts applies to the corruptions of christianity, and especially those of the papacy. The popes, more than any other princes,

did

did according to their will, and none but them exalted themselves above every god, i. e. all civil powers. They not only assumed the power of the Supreme God, but set up their own laws in opposition to his, and had wonderful success for a long period of time, viz. all the time of the divine indignation against the Jews (manifested by their dispersion) which yet continues. The popes advanced objects of worship unknown to the primitive christians, and discountenanced marriage, especially in the clergy, praising a single life in men and women, in opposition to it. As to the arrogance of the popes, the like was never known before.

9. The popes advanced numberless saints or dead men, to be objects of worship, and considered some of them as guardians, or protectors, of particular countries, and much wealth has been bestowed on their altars and shrines, and also given to the priests and monks, who have strenuously recommended this new worship, so that a great proportion of the landed property in several christian countries came into the hands of the church. And the spiritual was raised above the temporal jurisdiction in all the countries which acknowledged their power.

It is evident, however, that the deviations from the pure gospel began in the East, and were chiefly promoted by the Greek emperors, in the *general councils*, all of which were held in the East, tho' their decrees were adopted, and acted upon, in the West. It was in the second council of Nice, that the worship of images was established, and what follows seems to relate to the Greek empire in particular, or it may be reverted

to; as the only remains of the Roman empire, out of which sprang that of the popes, which had been mentioned as by way of parenthesis, or epifode.

40. This *time of the end*, may mean the end of the Roman empire, or an approach to what is more emphatically called the *latter days*. Palestine being no longer the object of the prophecy, but the eastern empire, the *king of the South*, and of the *North*, must have respect to that; and not to Palestine; and then the king of the South will be the Saracens. They conquered several provinces of the Greek empire, and several times pushed at, or endeavoured to take, Constantinople itself, but in this they did not succeed. But the king of the North, or the Turks, who came from the north, and whose forces consisted chiefly of horse, and of ships, overran all the Roman provinces, and put an end to the empire in the East.

43. They also conquered, and took possession of Palestine and Egypt, but were never able to subdue the Arabs, among whom are the antient Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites. And Lybia, together with all the Northern parts of Africa, tho' not properly conquered, became subservient to them. The only circumstance in this prophecy that does not seem to correspond to the fact relates to the *Ethiopians*. But by Ethiopia in the scriptures is frequently meant some part of Arabia, called the *land of Cush*, and the Turks frequently established themselves on the coast of Arabia, and had settlements on both sides of the red sea.

45. As this part of the prophecy is not as yet fulfilled, we cannot pretend to give the interpretation of it;

it ; but we are led from it to expect that the destruction of the Turkish empire will come in part from the East, or Persia, and in part from the North, or Russia ; that the Turks, on being driven out of Europe, will go back to Asia, and meet with their principal defeat in Palestine.

Ch. XII. 1. This is a pretty clear reference to the restoration of the Jews, which has been the subject of so many prophecies ; and if the interpretation of the preceding part of this prophecy be right, it may be expected to take place about the time of the fall of the Turkish empire ; but according to numerous prophecies, it will be preceded and accompanied with great revolutions and calamities.

3. After this, but at what distance is not said, will be the general resurrection. Here is no distinction of a *first resurrection*, as in the Revelation ; and therefore the Jews expect the resurrection will take place immediately on their restoration, and seem to imagine that they who rise from the dead will live just as they did before, only not subject to death. This was evidently the idea of the Pharisees in the time of our Saviour, which led the Saducees to ask whose wife would be a woman that had been married to seven brothers.

4. This is an intimation that the prophecies in this book would not be understood till the time of their completion, when, in consequence of much inquiry and investigation, knowledge of every other kind would be increased. As this has been remarkably the case of late years, it may be considered as a sign of the approach of the great events here predicted.

M m 3

6.—And

6.——*And I said.* LXX. Vul.

The person clothed in linen, is, no doubt, the same with him whose majestic appearance was described Ch. x, 5. He seems here to have appeared standing on the water, while the two others of inferior note stood one on one side, and the other on the other of the river.

7. This attitude and oath are similar to those of which an account is given in the Revelation, x. 5. Here the term announced, Ch. vii. 25. for the tyranny of the anti-christian power, seems to be declared to be coincident with the duration of the calamities of the Jews.

10. Here is another intimation that these prophecies will not be understood till about the time of their accomplishment; that in the mean time the state of discipline with which men will be exercised, will be the means of improving some, and of hardening others; producing a kind of infatuation and blindness to the calamities that were coming upon them. This we see to be the case at present; unbelievers shutting their eyes to the means of conviction, and giving wholly into worldly pursuits, without any thought about, or desire of, any life after this.

12. Here we have two other dates, which seem to commence from the same time with the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, as no intimation is given to the contrary; and to carry our views to some pleasing events beyond that date, viz. A. D. 1290 and 1335. It appears to me to be not improbable that we are already near the first of these three periods, or the downfall of the papacy and the monarchies of Europe. The
next

next may be the restoration of the Jews, their conversion to christianity by the coming of Christ in the clouds, and the third, their peaceable settlement after the invasion described by Zechariah. But these are mere conjectures.

13. Daniel must at this time have been very old, viz. between ninety and an hundred, but he is promised a happy resurrection when the great events announced to him should take place,

THE

MINOR PROPHEETS.

THE writings of these *twelve prophets*, being each of them of comparatively small bulk, have always been joined together, as one book; and in the enumeration of the sacred books by Josephus, they are no more than one; tho' they have no connection whatever, and relate to very different periods of time; some of them being prior, and others posterior, to any of the larger prophets.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

H O S E A.

HOSEA was in part cotemporary with Amos and Isaiah, and his mission, like that of Amos, chiefly respected the ten tribes, against whom he denounces the judgments of God on account of their idolatry and vices.

Ch. 1. 2. Whoever this woman was, whether a common prostitute, or one who had been an adulteress, the direction of God to marry her did not make her so. Tho' all vices were prohibited by the laws of Moses, they were too often practiced by the Israelites as well as by other people. A serious and proper use was made of this conduct of the prophet, as a sign to his countrymen.

4. Jehu destroyed the family of Ahab in Jezreel, and by the appointment of God ; but as he did it to satisfy his own ambition, and as he continued the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam, he had the promise of the kingdom only to the fourth generation ; and Jeroboam II. now reigning was the fourth in succession from him. Soon after this an end was put to the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians.

5. This may allude to some defeat of the Israelites in this valley, not mentioned in the history.

7 The

7. The Jews are to this day wonderfully preserved, and certainly not by means of *war* in any sense, and notwithstanding the most grievous persecution and calamities. It was customary with the Jews to give names to their children, expressive of any remarkable circumstance attending their birth, in order that the name might serve as a record of the event. A similar use was made of the names of this prophet's children.

10. Notwithstanding these awful predictions concerning God's casting off his people, he would not do it finally. His ancient promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would in due time be fulfilled, and in their largest sense.

11. This is the first intimation of the future reunion of the two kingdoms. The same circumstance is mentioned by other prophets. In the expression *Great shall be the day of Jezreel*, there is an allusion to the meaning of that word which signifies *the armies of God*, the divine power being wonderfully displayed in that great event.

Ch. II. 1 Here is a play upon the names of the prophet's children, which is usual in the scriptures. The exhortation is that the friends of true religion should plead with their brethren, that they would conduct themselves in such a manner as to be intitled to these appellations of *My people*, and *Having obtained mercy*.

2. The comparison of a revolt from the worship of the true God, to the conduct of a woman who forsakes her lawful husband, is common in the scriptures. Hence
idolatry

idolatry is frequently denominated *adultery*, God being considered as the husband, and the people as the wife.

5. It was the universal opinion of the heathen world that all the temporal blessings which accrued to them in the common course of things, came from the good will of their gods, and that temporal calamity would be the certain consequence of a neglect of their worship. This appeared on the promulgation of christianity, many persons dreading a change in the religion of the empire, lest it should draw after it a change in its fortune, from prosperity to adversity.

6. *I will hedge up her way.* LXX. N.

9—*That she may not cover her nakedness.* LXX.

14. In the prosecution of this fine allegory, the future reformation and prosperous state of the Israelites are clearly signified.

15. This was a very fertile valley to the North of Jericho, not far from Gilgal, and the restoration of it was en earnest of future blessings. *Newcome.*

16. The word *Baal*, tho' signifying no more than *Lord*, or *Master*, and therefore might be applied to a husband, was not to be used any more, because it had been appropriated to idolatry. It was the name of the sun as worshipped by various nations.

20—*That I am the Lord.* MSS.

This clearly refers to a state of permanent peace and prosperity, which has not yet taken place.

22. When the inhabitants of this country shall be in want of those productions, they shall apply to the earth from which they spring ; the earth shall, as it were

were, call to the heavens, whence comes the rain without which they cannot grow ; and the heavens to God, who alone has the power, by means of these channels, to bestow them.

23. Here again is an allusion to the names of the prophets children above mentioned, which would tend to impress those important predictions on the minds of all who were acquainted with them.

Ch. III. 1. Here is another symbolical action enjoined the prophet.

2. In contracts for temporary wives in the East, there is always the formality of a measure of corn mentioned, besides the stipulated sum of money. Harmer. ii, 513.

4. As *teraphim* were only used in idolatrous worship, it is probable that there is some mistake in the Hebrew copy of this passage, especially as the *Seventy* has *illumination*, by which they usually translate *Urim and Thummim* in this place. In some MSS. and antient versions it is *without a sacrifice and without an altar*. The meaning is, that the Israelites would have no prince of their own nation, and would also be deprived of the ordinances of their religion. And this prophecy has been literally fulfilled. The whole of the Israelitish nation are at this day in those circumstances, and the ten tribes without the practice or knowledge of their antient religion, which is agreeable to the prediction of Moses. Deut. xxviii. 64. *The Lord thy God shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even to the other, and then shalt thou serve other gods, whom*

whom neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

5. This time, there is reason to hope, is now approaching, when the Jews will revert to their antient form of government, and their antient divine religion ; but they must first be restored to their own country.

Ch. IV. 2. That is, murders were frequent, or quickly followed by one another.

4. The sin of my people instructed by the prophets, is as provoking to me as that of the priests.

5. That is *Samaria*, the metropolis of the country, but the meaning of this passage is very uncertain. The antient versions differ much in their interpretations.

12. By *staff* is meant *divination by rods*, which was much practised by the heathens. It was generally done by holding it upright, and being determined to go the way that it fell.

13. Promiscuous commerce was encouraged in several acts of heathen worship.

15. By *Bethaven*, which signifies the *house of vanity*, we are to understand Bethel, because it was a place of idolatrous worship.

—i. e. while ye worship idols, do not swear by the name of the true God.

18. That is, he is not to be reclaimed, he goes to partake of the feasts in the temples of idols:

With a little alteration it will be, his *princes are drunken*. This is favoured by the Chaldees.

Ch. V. 1. As *Tabor* was a mountain in Galilee, *Mizpah* was probably one in Gilead, both used for the purpose of idolatrous worship. As hunters and fowlers frequented

frequented such places, the metaphor taken from the nets they made use of in them is peculiarly expressive. As birds were drawn into snares in those places, so in them were persons inticed into idolatry.

2. This may be rendered, *and a net spread upon Tabor, which the hunters have laid deep for slaughter.* This is favoured by the LXX, and the Arabic.

7. *Now shall the locusts devour their portions.* LXX. N.

The image of adultery to denote idolatry is still kept up. The children they had by another husband were alienated from Jehovah. They were of another and strange family.

8. All those places were in the tribe of Benjamin, which was situated between the two kingdoms.

11—*because he willingly walked after vanity.* LXX. and N.

Vanity is a term frequently used to signify *idolatry*; all the heathen gods being either wholly impotent, or mere names. If the objects of worship were the sun, the moon, or any of the parts of nature, they were unable to assist men; and if they were the souls of dead men, they had no existence at all.

13. When the kings of Israel and Judah found themselves too weak to oppose their enemies, they applied for assistance to the Assyrians. See 2 Kings xv, 15. xvi, 7. 2 Chron. xxviii, 16, &c. and the kings of Assyria might in general be called *Farib*, or a person to take the part of another, and plead for him. Or there might have been a king of Assyria of that name.

13 Instead

13. Instead of *Yarib*, with a little alteration it will be the *great king*, a title perhaps assumed by the kings of Assyria.

14. Like a lion who departs leisurely after tearing his prey, none daring to pursue him.

Ch. VI. 1. This seems to have been a proverbial way of describing an event that would soon take place. It has been supposed by many christians that this passage contains a prediction of the resurrection of Christ on the third day; and it is possible that Paul may have alluded to it when he said 1 Cor. xv. 3. *That Christ rose again the third day according to the scriptures.* For it is not easy to pitch upon any passage in the scriptures that foretells the rising of Christ on the third day, and many of the applications of the scriptures to circumstances in the life of Christ very much resemble this.

3. His return into favour is as certain as the rising of the sun in the morning.

5.—*My judgements, A. V. N.*

I have sent my prophets to denounce my judgments, and admonitions, to instruct you.

6. Here, and on many other occasions, we see the subserviency of the ritual to the moral part of religion. It does not mean that God did not require sacrifice; for he certainly did so; but he preferred moral virtue to it. The knowledge of God implies obedience to his will, as God's knowing men implies his favourable notice of them, and his love to them, on that account.

8. *Gikad*

8. *Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity. She lieth in wait for blood.*

9. This is a very difficult passage. Shechem was a city of refuge in Ephraim. Grotius thinks that there has been a transposition in this place, and that the prophet meant to say, that as robbers laid wait for men in their way to Shechem, the priests laid their schemes to commit wickedness. Shechem might have been a place peculiarly infested by robbers.

With a little alteration this may be rendered, *As troops of robbers laying in wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the very roads, and rise early to accomplish their proposed wickedness.*

11.—*for himself.* MSS. LXX.

That is, a time for being cut off. The vintage as well as the harvest is often used figuratively to denote the same thing, as in Joel iii, 13. *Put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe. Come get you down, for the press is full, the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.* The same images occur in the book of Revelation. Ch. xiv 15 &c.

Ch. VII. 1. They who abused their prosperity, and instead of being grateful to God for it, became more abandoned.

3. They paid their court to these idolatrous princes by joining in their worship.

4. The idea intended to be conveyed by this metaphor is uncertain. It may be, they are as hot as an oven when it is sufficiently heated for the bakers purpose; and by being *hot* may be meant being inflamed with

with passion, more especially with lust, the comparison of idolatry to adultery being still kept up.

5. This may be an allusion to some particular act of which we have now no knowledge.

6.—*All night Ephraim sleepeth. In the morning he burneth as a flaming fire.*

They passed the night in sloth, and awaked with violent and irregular passions.

7. Four kings of Israel were put to death in the life of this prophet.

8. Not being turned it would be burned, and cast away, as not fit to be eaten.

9. He does not perceive the approach of his latter end.

12. When they are led by their counsellors to apply to foreigners for assistance,

With a little alteration, favoured by the LXX, it will be, *I will chasten them according to the report of their iniquity.* So the cry of Sodom was said to come up to God, and he punished the inhabitants according to it.

14. Notwithstanding the famine which he brought upon them, they did not apply to him for relief.

15. I have visited them both with judgments and with mercies, but to no purpose.

16. The LXX and Syriac have *They turned away for or to that which was not*, meaning to the worship of idols.

A power that doth not answer the purpose of him that makes use of it.

The

The rage of their tongues alludes to their impiety. When they were threatened by the Assyrians, they applied to Egypt, the great rival power of the Assyrians and Chaldeans. The kings of Judah did so and it was natural for the kings of Israel to do the same; tho' we have no account of it, but in such allusions as these in the prophetic writings.

Ch. VIII. 4. Zimri and Omri the father of Ahab became kings by rebellion, and not by divine appointment, as the first Jeroboam, and afterwards Jehu, Shallum, Menahem, and Pekah also came to the throne by means of treason; but this was after the reign of Jeroboam II. in which Hosea prophesied.

5. *Against thee. MSS. Remove far from thy calf, O Samaria. How long will they not endure in mercy in Israel. A. V. N.*

9. To be an adulteress, and receive a price for their prostitution, was infamous, but not so much so as to hire lovers.

10. *Tho' they were delivered among the nations. MSS. LXX. they shall soon be pained by bearing the burden of the king and the princes. A. V. N.*

Adopting the religions of the neighbouring nations.—They will suffer by the kings of Assyria, whose friendship they have courted, and by means of the princes whom they have set over themselves.

13. They partook of the sacrifices, which, when they were made in a regular manner, was not in all cases unlawful.

Many of the Israelites fled into Egypt when their country was seized by the Assyrians. Or going into

Egypt may have been a proverbial expression to denote servitude in general.

Ch. IX. 1. They offered the first fruits of their corn and of wine to strange gods.

2.—*Shall not fail in them.* MSS.

3. See Ch. vii, 16. and viii, 13.

4. This alludes to the entertainments that were usually provided at funerals.

By eating in a house where there was a dead body, persons contracted pollution. See Num xix, 14.

5. In their captivity they would have no opportunity of celebrating their proper festivals.

6—*The pleasant places for their souls.* MSS.

7. Their false prophets are here intended.

8. This means the true prophets, who warned them of their approaching calamity, by which they were caught as in a snare.

9. They were the men of Gibeah, who by abusing the Levite's concubine brought on that war, in which the tribe of Benjamin was almost exterminated.

10. With a little alteration from some MSS. it *will* be, *and they became as much abhorred* (by God) *as they had been beloved.*

Grapes found in a desert must be particularly acceptable. As such, the Divine Being received them into his favour. Shaw says, that in Barbary after mild winters, some of the more forward trees will sometimes produce a few ripe figs, six weeks or more before the usual time.

—Their worshipping Baal Peor was in the time of Moses. The rites of this worship are said to have been of the most abominable kind.

11. The

11. The people shall be almost exterminated.

15. The LXX, has, *O house of Israel.*

Gilgal, as well as Dan and Bethel, were infamous for idolatrous worship.

Ch. X. 3. There was anarchy in Israel for eleven years after the death of Jeroboam II. and it is propable that Hosea might be alive, and prophecy in that interval, tho' in the introduction of this book, it is only said that he prophecied in the reign of Jeroboam.

4. The word translated *hemlock* means some noxious weed which grew spontaneously.

5. *Bethaven* was a term of reproach for *Bethel*, where was one of the calves of Jeroboam.

6. This is the second time that the name of king *Jareb* occurs, meaning perhaps that king of Assyria to whom they then applied for assistance, and who afterwards oppressed them, whether it was his proper name, or not.

8. *Aven* is the same as *Bethaven*.

9. See Ch. ix, 9.

10. The *two iniquities* mean the worship of the calves at Dan and Bethel.

11. They would be reduced to a state of servitude.

14. This was the remarkable defeat of the Midianites by Gideon, when there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men by the hands of three hundred. Jud. viii, 10.

Ch. XI. 2. *When I called them they departed from me, favoured by the LXX and Syriac.*

— *They went before them.* MSS.

4. The allusion Bishop Newcome says is probably to the custom of raising the yoke forwards, in order to cool the neck of the labouring ox.

7. The same allusion as in v. 4.

With a little alteration, partly favoured by the LXX, it will be, *God will not raise them up, or save them, because they call upon him together*, i. e. he will not save them on account of their prayers and sacrifices, because their hearts are hypocritical.

8. The kings of Admah and of Zeboim, were joined with the kings of Sodom and Gomorrha in the war with Chederlaomer, Gen. xiv, 8; and they were probably destroyed at the same time with those cities.

9. This is a very obscure passage. There is probably some mistake in the Hebrew copy. Bishop Newcome conjectures it should be a word which signifies *burning*, or *consuming*, and that the meaning is he did not destroy all before him.

Perhaps the Divine Being is here opposed to the idols of the heathens, which were carried in procession from place to place, whereas God had a fixed habitation in his temple.

[10. This is a prophecy of the return of the ten tribes, as well as of that of Judah.

12 — *But hereafter they shall come down a people of God even a faithful people of saints.* A. V. N.

Ch. XII. 1. While they were tributary to Assyria they engaged the assistance of Egypt, to enable them to shake off their yoke. This, at least, was the case with Hoshea afterwards. 2 Kings, xvii, 4.

4 — *He found us.* MSS.

By

5. By this name he revealed himself to Moses in the bush. Exod. iii, 15.

9—*As in the days of old.* MSS. N.

11. Their altars were very numerous.

14—Will punish him for the reproach which he had cast upon God.

Ch. XIII. 1. It may perhaps be rendered, *When Ephraim feared, or observed, the commandment, he was exalted in Israel.*

To speak with trembling, means the fear of God, and humility of mind, which is often used as synonymous to piety and virtue in general; as pride is put for impiety and wickedness in general.

2. It was sometimes the custom of idolaters to kiss their images. Adoration was prostration and kissing the hand.

In the LXX there is a remarkable addition to this verse, viz. *But I am Jehovah thy God, who stretched out the heavens, and created the earth. My hands have made all the host of the heavens. And I shewed them not unto thee that thou shouldest walk after them, and I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, &c.* This has probably been dropped out of the Hebrew.

7. The panther, and not the leopard, is thought to be the animal here meant—*In the way to Assyria:* MSS. LXX.

11. The desire of a king was an offence against God, tho' he gratified them with the appointment of Saul; and he was about to put an end to their government, and to give them into the power of their enemies.

13. This is by a figure of speech imputing understanding to a child in the birth ; and the pains of child-bearing are frequently used as an emblem of pain and distress in general, which no child, if he had sense and power, would prolong, but rather shorten if he could.

14. This is a prophecy of the restoration of the Israelites, as if by a resurrection from the dead, to which the apostle Paul applies this passage, Cor. xv. 54.

Ch. XIV.—*Pardon iniquity—let us receive good that we may render the fruit of our lips.* A. V. N.

3. The kings of Israel were forbidden to multiply horses.

4. Here is a prophecy of the restoration of Israel, and also of their future reformation and obedience.

7. Roque the traveller, speaking of some wine with which he was presented on Mount Lebanon, says, "It will be difficult to find any more excellent."

8. An intimation to the Israelites that their prosperity came from God, and not from themselves.

9. These observations are those of the prophet, and a proper close to his book.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J O E L

JOEL probably lived in the reign of Manasseh. His prophecies relate wholly to the kingdom of Judah.

Ch. I. This first chapter contains an account of a great drought, a devastation by locusts, and consequent famine ; but it seems to be made use of as an emblem of great future calamity, on which the prophet enlarges afterwards.

5. The injury done to vines by locusts is said to affect the wine that is made from them for some years. Harmer, Vol. I, p. 388.

13—*Gird yourselves in sackcloth.* MSS. Syr.

Ch. II. We have here, as it appears to me, not a prediction concerning an army of locusts, as some think, but of the great calamities that were to befall the Jews before their final restoration. As these calamities were to arise from their being conquered by foreign and powerful nations, those armies are described as invincible, numerous as locusts, and darkening the air like them.

11. This is called the army of God, because appointed by him to execute his judgments. This being

N n 4

called

called *the great day of Jehovah*, must refer to something much more considerable than any devastation by locusts:

12 The people are invited to prayer and supplication, as the means of averting, or mitigating, the judgments that were impending over them.

17. In the East corn is generally hoarded in pits:

18. If the people truly repent, and turn to God, he will return to them, and bless them as in former times.

20. This *distinction of the armies that would invade Palestine, which are always represented as coming from the North, is so similar to that which is more fully described by Zechariah, that it must relate to the same event.*

21. Tho' the enemy has done great things, God can do great things also.

23.—*Even the former rain and the latter rain as aforesaid. LXX & N.* The former rain fell after autumn, and the latter rain about the time of harvest, or towards the end of April. See *Harmer*, Vol. I, p. 34—40.

28. This revival of the spirit of prophecy, in the extensive manner that is here described, seems to relate to a period that is not yet come, because it appears from the next chapter to accompany the restoration of the Jews, and their peaceable and final settlement in their own country. The apostle Peter supposes it to be that which was vouchsafed at the promulgation of the gospel.

30. This seems to be a figurative description of the
great

great revolution, attended with much bloodshed, that is to precede the restoration of the Jews ; such as is perhaps now taking place in Europe.

39. As this deliverance was to be in Zion, and in Jerufalem, it cannot refer to the safety of the christians at the conquest of Judea by the Romans ; because their salvation, or safety, was *out* of the country, not *in* it.

Ch. III. 1. From this it is evident that the prophecy in the preceding chapter relates to the time of the restoration of the Jews, when heavy judgments will be inflicted on all nations that have oppressed them. And it is clearly intimated in this and other prophecies, that some open opposition will be made to their return, tho' it will be finally fatal to the oppressors.

2. The scene of this future victory is here denominated by the name of the valley in which Jehosaphat defeated the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, a divine interposition being signally manifest on both occasions.

4. The inhabitants of these countries were often at enmity with the Israelites, and did them ill offices, which would now be requited.

13. This allusion to a harvest and a vintage is repeated in the Revelation, and is frequently used in the scriptures, to denote ripeness for punishment.

17. This cannot refer to the return from Babylon ; for this was previous to the great dispersion of the nation.

18. That a new river will rise in Jerusalem, and
take

take its course towards the Red sea, is announced both by Ezekiel and Zechariah. According to the latter, another river, or rather a branch of this will run into the Mediterranean sea. Ezek. xlvii, 2, &c. Zach. xiv, 8.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

A M O S.

AMOS was of Tekoa, which was in Judah, tho' his prophecies respect other nations more than that, especially the kingdom of Israel, the desolation of which he was the first to announce. But the punishment of all the neighbouring nations is threatened. At the same time he foretells the future restoration of the Israelites more distinctly than any prophet before Isaiah, with whom he was in part contemporary, tho' on the whole he was prior to him. For tho' it is said that he prophesied in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, which Isaiah also did, it is not said that he lived in any of the succeeding reigns, in which Isaiah chiefly prophesied.

Ch. I. 1. No mention is made of this earthquake in the book of Kings, or Chronicles; but it is referred to by Zechariah, as a very alarming event. For it is said
Ch.

Ch. xiv, 5. *Ye shall flee as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziab king of Judah.* It is also thought by some to be alluded to in Is. v, 25, and when he prophesied it was a recent event.

2. Carmel was a remarkable pleasant and fruitful mountain. Mention is made in Isaiah xxxv. 2, of the *glory of Carmel and Sharon.*

3. There is something striking in the style in which these judgments are announced, *for three and for four*, when the latter number, and perhaps a greater number, was intended. We find the same phraseology in the book of Proverbs, xxx, 18. *There are three things which are too wonderful for me, yea four which I know not* v. 21, *For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear*, and v. 29. *There be three things which go well, and four that are comely in going.*

The crime for which the Syrians of Damascus are here said to be punished, was their cruelty in the reign of Hazael 2 Kings, x, 32. *In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short, and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel, from Jordan Eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, Reubenites, and Manassites, from Aroer which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.* This had been announced to Hazael before he was king by the prophet Elisha, when this prophet wept in the presence of Hazael, and was asked the reason of it, he said 2 Kings viii, 12. *Because I know the evil that thou wilt do to the children of Israel. Their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men*

men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

4. Benhadad was the Son and successor of Hazael,

5. The *bar* means the gates of a city, which were fastened by a bar. The valley of *On* was another name for that in which Damascus stood. *Beth Eden*, or the house of pleasure, was another name for that delightful spot. These judgments were executed by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, as were those of other nations mentioned afterwards. The fulfilment of this prophecy is related 2 Kings xvi, 9.

6. Here judgments are denounced against all the cities of the Philistines for their cruel treatment of the Israelites, but the particular event here referred to is uncertain. It may have happened at the time mentioned 2 Chron. xxi, 16. where we read, *that the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines; and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians; and they came up into Judah and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left, save Jehoahaz the youngest of his sons.*

9. There was a league between the king of Tyre and Solomon, but history throws no light on the particulars here alluded to, of their delivering any captives of the Israelites to the Edomites.

11. The Edomites were frequently at war with the Israelites; but we do not find in the historical books, any account of the particular facts here alluded to, or those related of the Ammonites afterwards. It is obvious to remark, that had the books of the Old Testament

Testament been forgeries, care would, no doubt, have been taken that every prophecy should have an event corresponding to it. An inventor would not have left his work so apparently imperfect.

Ch. II. 1. This relates to some act of savage insult of which we have no account in the history. The walls of the city of Philadelphia it is said were cemented with mortar made of the bones of those who were besieged in it, by a prince who took it by storm, an instance of barbarity like that which is here mentioned.

3. This judgment was executed by Nebuchadnezzar.

4. Having denounced judgments against the neighbouring nations, the prophet comes to his own country; and in the first place prophecies against Judah, announcing the judgments which were executed, tho' not till a long time afterwards, by Nebuchadnezzar.

6. In the last place he enlarges on the judgments of God against the kingdom of Israel, which is the principal subject of his prophecy. Idolatry is not here particularly mentioned, tho' it is alluded to, in saying v. 8. that *they drank wine in the houses of their gods*. These judgments were executed by the Assyrians a century before those inflicted by the Chaldeans on the tribe of Judah.

7. *They bruise the head of the poor in the dust of the earth.* LXX, &c.

13. *Therefore behold I will press your place as a loaded corn wain presses its sheaves*, alluding to a method of threshing used in the East.

Ch. III. 3. i. e. Can I your God, and you appear as friends, when there is no good understanding between us.

4. As the lion roars only when his prey is in view, or when he seizes it, so the voice of God against any people is not heard till their destruction is near.

9. Let the enemies of the Israelites be witnesses of the judgments of God against them.

12. Only a few shall escape either in Samaria or in Damascus, which was then in league with Israel. Mr. Harmer finds here an allusion to the corner of a room being the most honourable place in it, according to the Oriental customs; and supposes the word *Damascus* in this place to mean not the city, but some elegant manufacture for which it was famous, and that the meaning of the passage is that some of the most opulent persons, or perhaps those who lived in retired places would escape.

14. This was accomplished by Josiah, who overturned the altar at Bethel, and burned upon it the bones of those who had worshipped there.

15. Ahab had built himself a house of ivory, 1 Kings xxii, 39, that is, cieled with ivory. In hot countries it is common to have houses in the neighbouring fields as well as in the city, those being inconvenient in hot weather.

Ch. IV. 1. The kine of Bashan were large and fat, and to them the rich and luxurious are compared.

2. They would be caught by the enemy as in a net, tho' some would escape as at the marshes, or openings, that were in it.

4 Gilgal

4. Gilgal was noted for idolatrous worship, as well as Bethel, as appears from Hos. iv. 15. ix, 15. and xii, 11.

5. Leaven was forbidden to be used in the sacrifices of the Israelites. But the Chaldee paraphrase reads a thank offering from violence, and the Hebrew words for *leaven* and *violence* very much resemble one another.

10. Pestilential diseases were common in Egypt after the subsiding of the Nile, as they are at this day.

12. *Thus will I do*, is a common form of imprecation, implying more than is expressed. Secker in Newcome.

13. This is a solemn warning of greater impending calamities, since lesser ones had failed to produce the desired effect, in bringing them to repentance.

Ch. V. 1. This was a kind of song, like that of Moses, or the Lamentation of Jeremiah.

5. It appears from Chr. viii, 14, that Beersheba was a place of idolatrous worship, as well as Dan and Bethel.

6—*To quench it in Israel.* LXX. MSS.

14. i. e. As the false prophets have said.

16. i. e. in singing mournful songs, This was done by women, who got a living by it, especially by attending at funerals.

18, i. e. who derided the prophecies, which many persons in those days did, as appears from Ez. xii, 22, where we read, *What is that proverb which ye have in the land of Israel; saying the days are prolonged, and every*

every vision faileth; and in Jer. xvii, 15, *Behold they say unto me, Where is the word of the Lord, Let it come now.*

26. Tho' the worship of the tabernacle was, no doubt, kept up, according to the Mosaic ritual in the wilderness, many of the people would probably continue in a private manner the superstitious and idolatrous practices to which they had been accustomed in Egypt, and retain the symbols of that religion. The tabernacle of Molock must have been such an image, or shrine, or small tent, to keep it in, as could be carried without much observation, as *Rachel carried her father's teraphim*. The figure of a star was perhaps an emblem of some celestial deity. For proper images in the human form were not used in very early times, nor is there any allusion to them in the books of Moses.

Molock was the sun as worshipped by the Moabites and Ammonites, the word signifying *king*, or superior. *Chiun* is supposed to have been the planet saturn. In the Seventy it is *Raiphon*, and in Acts xii, 42 *Rephan*, which might have been occasioned either by mistaking one letter for another something resembling it in the Hebrew language, or by using the Egyptian name of the planet, which is said to be *Rephan*, instead of the Hebrew one.

It appears from the Egyptian alphabet published by Kircher that Remphan was the name of Saturn, so that the LXX might chuse that term in preference to the Hebrew *Chiun*, as more intelligible in Egypt. *A-beneza* says that *Chiun* signified Saturn among the Persians as well as the Hebrews. Remphan, according to Diodorus

Diodorus Siculus, was the name of one of the ancient kings of Egypt, and his soul might be supposed to have been translated to that planet. *Spencer*, p. 669.

If the reading of the LXX, followed by the New Testament, be genuine, the meaning will probably be that this deity was the moon. *Rhe* in the Irish language, which was Phenician, signifies the moon. The Hebrew resembles it, and so does the Greek name of Juno (*ηρα*) who was the moon.

27. This is the first threatening of a captivity to the ten tribes. Many of the people had probably been carried by Hazael to Damascus; but now they were threatened to be carried to a much greater distance, as they actually were by the Assyrians. It was perhaps to this prophecy that Isaiah refers Ch. vii, 8, *Within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people*. This was declared about twenty years before this event, tho' there was then no appearance, or suspicion of any such thing. But this prophecy of Amos might have been delivered sixty five years before it, which will be towards the end of the reign of Jeroboam II, in which Amos prophesied.

Ch. VI. 1. The meaning of this passage is very uncertain; but it may refer to the idolatrous Hebrews chusing to give their children such names as were most respected in the neighbouring idolatrous nations, viz. Syrian, or Assyrian names.

According to one MSS. the meaning may be, *Reckon up by name the chief of the nations, and go to them, ye house of Israel*,

2. These cities had been lately conquered, notwithstanding their addictedness to idolatrous worship, and consequently their being under the protection of the objects of that worship. *Calne*, a city in the region of Babylon, had been lately conquered by the Assyrians. *Hamath* was a city on the Orontes in Syria, and had been conquered by Jeroboam, 2 Kings, xiv, 25, and also by the Assyrians, Ib. xix, 13. *Gath* was taken by Uzziah. 2 Chron. xxvi, 6.

3. They called for it by way of derision, believing that it would never come.

6. They lived luxuriously, without any feeling for the public calamity.

10. This is a description of great calamity by a plague, when the funeral rites were performed by the nearest relations, accompanied with impenitence and despair, never thinking of God or his judgments.

When the Jews celebrate a funeral in Barbary, they commonly sing the forty ninth psalm, and frequently repeat other portions of scripture, in which the name of God is mentioned.

12. They acted as absurdly as asses, which had then no shoes, attempting to run on a rock, or to plow it. They perverted judgment, and made courts of justice bitter and distressing to men.

14. *Hemath* was near the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali. The river of the desert was a small river in the Southern limit of the tribe of Simeon.

Ch. VII. 1. We are here presented with a series of visionary representations, to shew the great destruction that

that would be made of the people of Israel, and that mercy would be shewn to a few.

4. According to the LXX it is, *eat up the portion of Jehovah*, i. e. the land of Israel. Deut. xxxii, 9.

7. Divine judgments are sometimes denoted by a *measuring line* and a *plumb line*; intimating that a country was measured out for destruction, the same instruments being used in building or taking down buildings. The emblem implied farther that the judgment would be regulated by the rule of justice.

8. That is, I will not repeat the judgment, but pour out all my indignation at once. This was the case with the ten tribes, but not with the kingdom of Judah. The Jews were carried into captivity to Babylon, but they returned in part before their final dispersion.

17. The behaviour of these false prophets to Amos, was similar to that of others to Jeremiah in a later period. They endeavoured to dissuade him from discharging his duty, and the divine judgments fell upon themselves in the first place.

Ch. VIII. 5. By making the measure small, and the weight large, according as they bought or sold, they defrauded those with whom they dealt.

6 They reduced the poor to a state of servitude for a small price, and sold what was of little value.

8 The land would rise and fall in the earthquake, as the river of Egypt rose and fell.

9. A state of prosperity shall be changed into a state of adversity.

12. The ten tribes have been wholly without prophets, and the greater part of them without any of their

sacred books, from the time of their captivity ; and the Jews had no prophets from the time of Malachi to that of John the Baptist.

14 The calves of Jeroboam were set up at Dan and Bethel ; but Beersheba of Judah was also a place of idolatrous worship.

Ch. IX. 6 This is an allusion to the houses in the East where the most habitable and ornamented part of the house is the upper story, the lower being used for store rooms, and other inferior uses.

7. Calmet has made it very probable that *Caphsator* was *Crates*. Some of the Syrians were settled in *Kir*, perhaps the city of the Medes mentioned Is. xxii, 6. As God had brought the Israelites from Egypt, so he had from time to time removed other nations, and he had the same power still.

9 This is a promise that the most valuable of the Israelites would be preserved in that great dispersion, in which the worthless would perish.

11. This is the first distinct prophecy of the return of the Jews from their great dispersion, and of their flourishing state, and their undisturbed enjoyment of their country afterwards. For Amos was prior to Isaiah who wrote more largely on the subject. That this prophecy looks much farther than the return from the Babylonish captivity, is evident from its being said that they should *be no more rooted out of their land*, whereas their dispersion by the Romans was far more complete and disastrous than that by the Chaldeans, or by any other enemies in former times.

12 *That*

12. *That the residue of men may seek Jehovah, and all the heathens who are called by my name.* LXX, &c. N.

13. *They shall melt, i. e. overflow or run down with plenty, as in Joel iii, 18, The mountains shall drop new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk.*

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

O B A D I A H.

OBADIAH prophesied after the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, while the Edomites, and other neighbouring nations, were exulting over the calamities of Judah, to which they had greatly contributed. For this they are threatened with an exemplary punishment.

1. God is represented as sending ambassadors to the different nations, to engage them in a confederacy against Edom.

2. The tract occupied by the Edomites was of no great extent, and altogether mountainous.

3. *Hath lifted thee up.* MSS. LXX.

The situation of this city among the mountains, gave them a confidence in their security, which they would find to be ill founded.

5. The very same comparison is made use of by Jeremiah Ch. xlix. 9 on the same occasion. Robbers
would

would have left something, but of the Edomites nothing would be left.

7. Their confederates went with them to the borders of their country, and then deserted them, and joined the enemy.

10. The Edomites, as well as the other neighbouring nations, promoted the distress of Judah in the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar; and for this they are threatened with greater calamity themselves.

13.—*Rejoiced in their affliction.* MSS. Syr.

16. All these nations were subdued by the Chaldeans.

17. A happy return is promised to the Israelites, but none to any of these people. On the contrary, when the Israelites should return, they would occupy the countries which these their enemies had possessed.

20. Sepharad was probably a place in Idumea.

21. This was fulfilled when Hyrcanus conquered the Edomites, and united their country to Judea. But the proper and complete fulfilment of this prophecy will be at the restoration of the Jews, when they will possess the country of Idumea, as well as that of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J O N A H.

JONAH must have been a prophet of great consideration in his time, which was that of Jeroboam II. king of Israel ; and he delivered other predictions besides that which is the subject of this book. For we read, 2, Kings xiv, 25. *Jeroboam restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath to the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath Hepher, which is a city in Galilee.* In point of time Jonah was the first of all the prophets after Moses who committed their predictions to writing. It is only supposed that Samuel wrote part of the historical book which bears his name, and Elijah and Elisha, tho' great prophets, wrote nothing.

This book is chiefly historical, and the prediction it contains, if indeed it can be so called, for it is rather a threatening not carried into execution, relates wholly to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, then in great power, and probably in the reign of Pul the founder of it.

Ch. I. 2. The empire of Assyria must have been of some continuance before this time, to have been so corrupt as this account implies.

3. This *Tarsbith*, to which they sailed from a port on the Mediterranean, was probably *Tartessus* in Spain. But there was another place of the same name, to which they went from a port on the Red Sea, supposed by some to have been in the East Indies, but placed by Mr. Bruce in Africa.

It seems extraordinary that a prophet, who had had communications with God, should disobey his positive orders, and go a different way from that on which he was sent. He thought, no doubt, that it would be a dangerous undertaking to denounce the judgments of God against such a city as Nineveh, and there were examples of prophets suffering from the persecution of the princes against whom they were sent, as of Elijah by Ahab, and of Isaiah, as it is said, by Manasseh. But why he should leave the country, and fly in a direction opposite to Nineveh, does not clearly appear. It is plain that he considered Jehovah as the Lord of heaven and earth v. 9. and that he had the disposal of the fate of Nineveh, and no doubt of that of all other places; so that he could not flee from his power. But he might perhaps think that he should be less noticed if he was out of the land of Israel, from which all the prophets had arisen, and where they received their commissions; and he had not been threatened in any particular manner if he did not go. It appears also by his own confession, Ch. iv. 2, that he was apprehensive that the judgments he was sent to denounce would not be executed, in consequence of the divine forbearance; and therefore that he would be deemed a false

false prophet, and be exposed to ridicule and insult on that account.

7. That Superior Beings superintended the affairs of this world seems to have been the belief of all mankind, and also that those beings would punish persons who were guilty of great crimes. They also thought that by means of lots those who were guilty of them might be discovered.

10. All the nations bordering on Palestine appear to have had the greatest idea of the power of the God of the Hebrews ; and as they were acquainted with the history of their settlement in it, we cannot wonder at this. When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had brought the ark of their God into their camp, we read, 1 Sam. iv, 7. *they were afraid. For they said, God is come into the camp, And they said, Woe unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods. These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with the plagues in the wilderness.* We may, therefore, rather wonder that these mariners should take Jonah into their ship when he told them why he fled. But as he did not appear to apprehend any thing from his flight, they might not give much attention to it at the time.

14. We see, that notwithstanding they worshipped other gods, and, no doubt, prayed to them in distress, they also believed they were in the power of the god of Jonah, and therefore joined in prayer to him. The worship of any one god among the heathens did not imply the disbelief of the power of others.

17. It is impossible to say what fish this was, or in what

what part of the body Jonah was lodged. Wherever it was, his life must have been preserved by a continued miracle. *Three days and three nights*, meant probably only one whole day and a part of the preceding and following day. Thus Jesus is said to have lain, in imitation of Jonah, three days and three nights in the earth; when he was buried late in the evening of Friday, and rose again very early on the Sunday morning following.

Ch. II. 4. This he might presume on finding that his life was *miraculously preserved* when he must have expected instant death: As only Jonah himself could give any account of this prayer, he must, no doubt, have written this book.

Ch. III. 1. Having found it was in vain to evade the command of God, he now, tho' with great reluctance complies.

4. It is said by Diodorus Siculus to have been fifty of our miles in circumference; and twenty miles being a day's journey to a man on foot, the meaning must be, that it would take a man three days to walk round it.

6. Pul king of Assyria invaded the land of Israel about thirteen years after the death of Jeroboam II. so that either he, or his predecessor, might have been their king.

8. This making the cattle to fast, and wear sackcloth, could not be on account of any thing that they had done. But it made every thing about the people wear a mournful aspect. Plutarch says that when the Persian general Misiastias was slain, the horses and
mules

mules of the Persians were shorn, as well as themselves. So Abraham's circumcising his slaves as well as his son Ishmael, was an action that respected himself, and not them. In the same light I consider the baptizing of the children of christian parents.

9. This is another circumstance that shows the great respect in which the God of Israel was held in the neighbouring nations.

10. This was agreeable to the maxims of God's government as contained in Ez. xxxiii, 14. *When I say to the wicked man, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that which he had robbed, and walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

Ch. IV. 2. Rather than have the character of a false prophet, he would have seen the large city destroyed.

6. The eastern side of Nineveh is higher ground than the western; so that from it Jonah would have a better view of the city. Here he seems to have made himself a temporary shelter, and this might have been shaded by some plant of quick growth, which is ascribed to the providence of God. But it might not have grown in a single night, tho' it perished in one.

8. According to all travellers, this country is intolerably hot in some seasons of the year:

10. Besides his concern on his own account, to give propriety to this reproof, he must have lamented that so fine and useful a plant should have perished so soon. In the Hebrew it is called the *son of the night*, which may

may imply nothing more than that it grew chiefly in the night, which in so hot a climate it might do rather than in the day, and not that it had grown up in a single night, tho' it was destroyed in one.

11. Reckoning these to have been one fifth of the inhabitants, it must have contained six hundred thousand persons.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

M I C A H.

MICAH was of the tribe of Judah, but his prophecies relate to both the kingdoms. Micah is mentioned in the book of Jeremiah as follows. On a proposal to put Jeremiah to death for prophesying that Jerusalem would be taken by the Chaldeans, it is said Jer. xxvi, 17, *Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Did Hezekiah king of Judah, and all Judah, put him at all to death? Did he not fear the Lord, and beseech*

beseech the Lord? and the Lord repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them.

Ch. I. 5, Idolatry was practiced both in Samaria the capital of the kingdom of Israel, and in Jerufalem, that of Judah.

7. They pretended that their prosperity had been owing to their devotion to their idols, and therefore, as a proper and instructive punishment, their sufferings would come from other idolaters.

10. The allusion is probably to jackals, who prowl about in companies, and make a dismal howling, especially in the night. Ostriches also are said to make a doleful cry.

The prophet seems to have made choice of this place, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, for the sake of the meaning of the word, which is *ashes*. Let the inhabitants of the city, which has its name from ashes, roll themselves in them as a token of their grief.

It is not improbable, from comparing the LXX with the present Hebrew, that it was originally *Even in Bochin* (a place of great weeping) *weep ye not*.

11.—*He shall receive of you his desire, MSS. his punishment. LXX.*

Saphir signifies *fair* or *delightful*, and their future condition was to be the reverse of this. *Zaanan* was in the tribe of Judah. There was no leisure for the usual mourning and lamentation for the dead. *Beth-azel* was near Jerufalem, and its inhabitants would be plundered by the enemy that besieged the metropolis.

12. *Moroth* was in the tribe of Judah.

12. Ma-

13. Lachish was in Judah, and was perhaps the first to adopt the idol worship of Israel.

14. Moresheth of Gath. To the Philistines of this place they would give money for protection. Achzib signifies *deceit*, and to this there is an allusion in the prophecy. The inhabitants of this place would disappoint their king, and become an easy prey to their enemies.

15. Mareshah signifies an *inheritance*, and they are threatened with an heir, who would take possession against their will. Adullam was a fortified city of Judah, near to the kingdom of Israel.

16. To tear the hair, and otherwise deform themselves, was usual in mourning. Some eagles have no feathers on the head.

Ch. II. 4. *How hath he removed it from him.* MSS. LXX. &c.

5. The land of Canaan was divided to the Israelites by lot; but all this would now be reversed. The land would be given to another people.

6. It would answer no good end for the prophets to admonish the people. They would only be insulted by them.

7. To those who accused Jehovah for the troubles they experienced, it is replied, that the cause was in themselves, in not walking uprightly before him.

8. It is conjectured that the original reading was as follows, *Even heretofore, or long since, have my people risen up as an enemy, in opposition to those who were at peace with them. They pull off the mantle from them who securely pass by.* The LXX in some measure favours this sense.

8 This

This is an allusion to some historical circumstance with which we are not well acquainted. It is thought to refer to some unprovoked invasion of Judah by Israel. But it could not be that in the reign of Ahaz, of which we have an account 2 Chron. 28, when, as we read v. 8. *the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters, and took away also much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria*, when a prophet persuaded the people to return them.

10. For your injustice to your brethren you shall be dispossessed of your country.

11. Any person who would flatter them with lies would be caressed and entertained by them.

With a little variation, favoured in some measure by the antient versions, the meaning will be, *If any man, even a vagrant, and of a deceitful and lying spirit, should prophecy unto thee for wine, and strong drink, he shall even be the prophet of this people*, i. e. he will be regarded, and believed by them, vi, 16. The LXX has *nations*, נַחֲמִים being here put for נַחֲמִים.

12. This is a promise of the future restoration of the Israelites, when they would return in crouds from their dispersion. Bozrah in Idumea was famous for large flocks of sheep.

13. He that would break the bonds of their captivity, and be their leader in their return, conducted by God himself.

Ch. III. 2. Who exercise all kinds of cruelty, of which this is a figurative description.

5. They

5. They will be at enmity with them from whom they receive no presents.

6. This is similar to what was prophesied by Amos, that Israel would be a long time without any prophet, and that there would be a famine, not of bread, but of the word of God.

11. Notwithstanding the addictedness of the Israelites to the worship of other gods, they never thought less highly of the power of their own God, or disbelieved the miracles wrought by him in their favour in Egypt, and in the wilderness. They were only willing to believe that there was nothing absolutely incompatible between the acknowledgment of his supremacy, and the rites of heathen worship. This is the passage that is quoted in Jeremiah, as recited above.

Ch. IV. 1. These three verses are, with very little variation, the same with the second third, and fourth verses of the second chapter of Isaiah. They might have been originally from either of them, and at the time so well known, that it was thought unnecessary to mention the first author. This circumstance gives the prophecy they contain the greater authority; and a more remarkable or more valuable prediction was never given. It is in fact a confirmation of the prophecy of Moses, and of the original promise of God to Abraham, concerning the future happy state of his posterity, and all the world; when all nations, instructed by the Hebrews, and resorting to them for divine communications, would enjoy uninterrupted peace and prosperity.

8. A

8. A fortress in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

9. Is not God your supreme ruler and guide? Will he not appear to defend you?

10. The pains and distress that they were in would exceed the pains of childbirth, i. e. in increase and much happiness. This is the first intimation of the Jews being carried to Babylon, and it was before the Chaldeans made any great figure among the nations; the Assyrians being then the predominant power.

12. There are farther accounts of the opposition that will be made to the settlement of the Israelites in their own country in other prophecies, and of the punishment of their oppressors, especially in Zechariah.

Ch. V. 2. This is an intimation that the leader of the Jews at their restoration will be of the family of David, Bethlehem having been the place of his nativity.

3. The tribe of Judah was to continue in a distressed state till the time in which the ten tribes would be brought back.

4—*And they shall return.* MSS.

Under this great leader, whoever he is to be, as he will act by divine direction, they will be safely conducted, like sheep by a shepherd. His influence will extend to all the earth, and under him there will be universal peace. The person here described may be the Messiah, or some other person acting under him.

5. The Assyrian seems to be put for any nation, or nations, that shall oppress the Israelites. In due time a sufficient number of deliverers, here indicated by *seven*

ven and eight, will be raised up, and their oppressors will be punished.

7. This may refer to the divine knowledge which the Israelites will be the means of communicating to all the nations among whom they will be dispersed. This illumination will be the effect of their teaching, and not any wisdom naturally acquired by the nations. This has been the case in fact, all important religious truth having been derived to all nations from Jews, or christians, who originally were Jews.

8. The destruction that will be made of the enemies of the Jews, and who now hold them in a state of oppression, is here compared to the havock made by lions who had lain some time lurking among sheep, and then suddenly rising, and shewing themselves. This, however, may not be effected by themselves, but by the Divine Being punishing the nations, in the course of his providence, on their account.

10. This deliverance will not be effected in the usual manner of war, but by some divine interposition.

13. At that time all the remains of idolatry will be extirpated.

Ch. VI. 1. This is an enumeration of the causes of complaint that God had against his people.

5. Shittim was the place at which the Israelites were encamped when they were seduced by the Midianites into the worship of Baal Peor. From this time to that of their encampment at Gilgal, very great events, and signal interpositions of divine providence, had taken place.

6 This

6 This is a noble and animated view of the great objects of all the divine dispensations ; shewing the subserviency of ritual worship to practical morality. It is similar to many other passages in the ancient prophets.

Bishop Butler supposes that the question in v. 6—7 is that of Balak, and that v. 8 contains the answer of Balaam, announced in v. 5. But it seems to be too excellent for such a man as Balaam was.

9—*And there is found wisdom with them that fear his name.* MS. N.

13—*Wherefore I will begin to smite thee.* MSS. N.

16. Omri was a king of Israel, whose idolatry exceeded that of the kings who had preceded him. 1 Kings xvi, 25. But his son Ahab went beyond him, introducing the worship of Baal.

Ch. VII. 4. The time of judgment announced by the prophets:

6. This passage is quoted by Jesus, as what would be applicable to the state of the world on the promulgation of christianity.

7. This is the language of the people in their captivity; and repenting of their sins.

12. By the help of the LXX and some MSS. we may suppose the meaning to have been, *In that day shall they (the captive exiles) come unto thee from Assyria, even unto Egypt, and from Tyre unto the river Euphrates, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain, i. e. from all the countries in which they have been dispersed.*

14. This may be supposed to be an address to the rulers of the people of Israel on their return, or to God, as the chief shepherd of Israel.

15. According to a reading favoured by the LXX it may be, *I will shew to thee marvellous things.*

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

N A H U M.

JEROME says that Nahum is called an *Eil-koshite* from a village in Galilee. He probably lived in the reign of Hezekiah, and prophesied soon after the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmanassar king of Assyria. Josephus places him in the reign of Jotham, and says that his prophecies came to pass one hundred and fifteen years after they were delivered.

Ch. I. 1. This prophecy opens with an animated description of the power of God, and his determination to destroy all his enemies.

8. It is said that the river on which Nineveh was built, overflowing its banks, broke down a great part of its wall while it was besieged, on which the king in despair, burned himself and his palace.

10 *For*

10. *For while the princes are yet perplexed.* MS.
A. V. N.

11. Meaning the king of Assyria.

12. Nineveh, besides being situated on the Tigris, was not far distant from the Euphrates, which was within its empire ; and therefore the king of it is called the ruler of many waters. And this is a prophecy of the humbling of this great power, and the final restoration of the Israelites.

Ch. II. 2. It is not certain from this verse that Nahum wrote after the captivity of the ten tribes ; because he only speaks of the calamities which had befallen them, and they were much reduced before their final conquest.

That is, Jacob will then appear to be intitled to the name of *Israel*, one who prevails with God.

3. We have here, and in the following verses, a description of the preparations for a siege, and for war in general. But some think that these verses describe more naturally preparations for the defence of a city, than those of the besiegers to take it.

6. Perhaps to keep off the besiegers.

7. *The waters of Nineveh are like a pool of water.*
MS. N.

This is a representation of the taking of the city. The voice of doves is expressive of mourning.

8. The inundation which was made for the defence of the place long remained as a lake in its neighbourhood.

8. The allusion is thought to be to a pot becoming

P p 3

black

black when it is placed upon the fire. May God blacken his face is at this day a common curse in the East.

11. This is a fine allusion to the strength and ferocity of the Assyrians, and to the capital of the kingdom, as a den of lions.

Ch. III. 4 The Assyrians, as well as the Chaldeans, were much addicted to idolatry, which, with respect to God, is usually called adukery.

8.—*Her wall was water MS. LXX.*

This was a city in Egypt, perhaps the same with ancient Thebes. The word *Ammon* probably came from *Ham*, the son of Noah, whose posterity settled in Egypt. Some interpreters suppose this to be a narration of what was past, and others a prophecy of future calamity. This last is agreeable to the versions of the Seventy, and the Arabic. But if it was a prophecy, it could not have served as an example or warning to Nineveh, and in that light it seems to be introduced. It is thought that Senacherib king of Assyria had conquered Egypt, and done what is here mentioned, but others find no event to correspond to it till the more certain conquest of the country by Nebuchadnezzar. The ancient history of Egypt is too imperfect to clear up this difficulty.

11. It would be reduced to servitude.

16 It is probable that Nineveh was the great centre of the Indian commerce, and that the inhabitants became rich and powerful by that means, as did Tyre, and other cities. Yet, numerous as were its merchants,
and

and great as was its wealth, it would be plundered, and left as bare, as a green field by the locusts.

18. It is said that of all the nations dependant on the Assyrians none came to their assistance when the city was besieged. It was taken by the joint forces of the Medes and Babylonians ; but the time is uncertain. Josephus says it was in the reign of Hezekiah, but it was standing in the reign of Josiah, 2 King xxiii, 29. Zeph. ii, 13. and in Tobit Nineveh is said to have been taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and Assuerus, who is thought to have been the same with Cyaxares of Herodotus.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

H A B A K K U K.

HABAKKUK was probably contemporary with Jeremiah. He laments the degeneracy of his times, and foretells the desolation of his country by the Chaldeans, and the destruction of that nation afterwards. But there is more of piety, and less of prediction, in his book than in those of any of the preceding prophets.

Ch. I. 5. The Jews had no apprehension of the power of the Chaldeans, and would not believe what the prophets foretold concerning them.

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8 When

1. That the Government in the East are first
in order of priority, and then sometimes have a
great interest in the matter, and if this means do in-
crease in number and size.

2. That the Government are very in their search,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

3. That the Government are very in this time,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

4. That the Government are very in this time,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

5. That the Government are very in this time,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

6. That the Government are very in this time,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

7. That the Government are very in this time,
and in the end will have many more than they de-
sire for the present.

C.

Ch. II. 3. Prophecies become clearer as the time of their fulfilment draws nearer. In the mean time it becomes us to wait with patience, having perfect confidence in the promise of God, that whatever he has announced will come to pass, tho' perhaps not so soon as we may be apt to imagine.

4. If he faint, my soul will have no pleasure in him.
MS. which makes it agree with Heb. x, 38. K.

This is a prophecy against the Chaldeans, who would in due time be punished for their arrogance and oppression.

11. This may refer to the great buildings erected by Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. The stones and wood, which were to be overturned, should proclaim the woe that follows. *Newcome.*

12. It was at a vast expence, and, no doubt, by great oppression, that the city of Babylon was built.

14. The power and supremacy of God would be wonderfully displayed in the punishment of the Chaldeans, and other enemies of the Jews, especially in those glorious times which will attend and follow the restoration of the Jews.

15. The advantage which the Chaldeans had over the neighbouring nations, is compared to that which one man gains over another, by making him drink to intoxication. Also, to drink of a cup is an usual emblem of being made to share in calamity. And as the Chaldeans had made other nations drink of their cup, God would make them drink of his.

17. They would be made to suffer for all the devastation

tation they had made, both by the destruction of cattle, and of men, wherever they went.

18. Tho' remarkably addicted to idolatry, it would not avail to their preservation.

With a little alteration the sense will be. *What profits the graven image when its maker has engraven it? The molten image, that teacher of lies, when its maker trusteth in it? He worketh to make dumb idols.*

Ch. III. 1. There is peculiar sublimity in this hymn, in which the prophet describes the great power of God, displayed in punishing the enemies of his people, and expresses his confidence in the divine favour, notwithstanding all the judgments with which he would justly visit them. There are no sentiments like these in any heathen writer.

2.—*Revive us.* MSS.

3. Here the prophet recounts the appearances of God in favour of his people in the wilderness. Teman was in Idumea, and Paran in Arabia Petraea.

4. The brightness of the shekinah, or that bright cloud which was the token of the divine presence, tho' exceedingly dazzling, only concealed his splendour and power.

7. The Midianites were defeated by the Israelites after they had seduced them into idolatry, and in the battle Balaam was slain.

8. It was not from anger at the Red Sea, or the river Jordan, that God divided their waters, but for the deliverance of his people.

9. With a little alteration it will be, *According to the oath which Jehovah spake to the tribes.*

11 This

11. This may refer to the standing still of the sun and moon in the time of Joshua. Or the expression *stand still* may signify nothing more than *astonishment*, which frequently makes persons stand still, and is poetically ascribed to them as to other inanimate objects.

13. This may have a reference to the death of the first born in Egypt. Martin the Benedictine thinks that here is an allusion to the practice of scalping.

14. The original is imperfect. Perhaps it may be altered to read as follows, *Thou didst strike with his staff*, viz. that of Moses, *the heads of the village warriors*, i. e. the military force of the country.

16. *Trembling entered into my bones.* MSS. A. V. — *Because I shall be brought to the day of trouble, to go up captive under the people who shall invade us with their troops.* MSS. N.

With a little alteration, and the help of the anti-ent versions, it may be rendered, *my bodily frame trembled under me. I shall rest in the day of trouble, to go up to the people of my habitation, or vicinage.* Or, *May I rest in the day of trouble, &c.* On the invasion of the country by the Chaldeans, this prophet is said to have fled to Arabia, and after the invasion to have returned to his place of residence. Of this he might have had a comfortable assurance, and thence his confidence in the divine protection, in the extreme desolation of the country, which he proceeds to describe.

This was in foresight of the captivity of the Jews by the Chaldeans.

17. There is no where so noble an expression of confidence

science in the power and goodness of God, notwithstanding every appearance to the contrary, as in this passage.

19—*He will place me on my high places.* MSS.

We shall return with swiftness from our captivity, and repossess the land of our inheritance.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

ZEPHANIAH.

ZEPHANIAH prophesied after the captivity of the ten tribes, and his predictions respect the tribe of Judah. Like the prophets who preceded him, he inveighs against the idolatry of the people, and their vices in general; but announces likewise the kind intentions of God in their favour in future time.

Ch. I. 3. Meaning probably *idolatry*:

4. *I will cut off the name of Baal.* MSS. LXX. &c

5. Many persons, it seems, joined a respect for Jehovah, to that for the gods of the neighbouring nations; which shews that their attachment to other gods did not imply any disbelief of the power, and the superior power, of their own God, or of the truth of the miracles wrought by him in their favour in former times.

8. The sons of Josiah were idolaters.

In

—In the worship of some of the heathen deities, the worshippers were clothed in habits peculiar to them,

9. According to the LXX it is, *Who enter the house of the Lord thy God (i. e. Jehovah) with violence and deceit.*

This was probably an allusion to the custom of some heathens, in not treading on the thresholds of their temples. For it may be rendered *leaping over the thresholds.*

10. The fish gate in Jerusalem, Jerome says, was opposite to Joppa. The *second city* is mentioned 2 Kings xxii, 14, and 2 Chron xxxiv, 22.

11. This was a valley in Jerusalem which divided one part of the city from the other. Perhaps the trading part of the people lived chiefly there.

12. Those who are rich and thoughtless are compared to the unbroken surface of fermenting liquors. *New come.*

Ch. II. 1. *Not desired* may mean *hated*. But some of the antient versions read, *The nation that will not receive instruction.* The address is to the inhabitants of Judea:

4. Here the prophet foretells the fate of some of the nations that were neighbours to the Israelites, and who had been their enemies. They were to be utterly rooted out, and their countries to be occupied by the Israelites after their return from their dispersion.

5. The *Cherethites* were Philistines who conformed to the Hebrew religion, and were employed by David in his armies &c.

6 *Che-*

6. *Chereth* was probably *Crete*, from which island the Philistines are said to have come.

7. The Philistines were settled within the land of Canaan; and tho' they were not dispossessed before; all their country is to be occupied by the Israelites after their restoration.

8. The Moabites and Ammonites were to share a fate similar to that of the Philistines. As they had insulted the Israelites, their country was to be desolate, and to be finally occupied by the Israelites.

11. The LXX has, *which destroy all the gods.*

An end will be put to all idolatry.

12—*By the sword.* MSS. Syr.

The Ethiopians or Cushites, inhabited in part Ethiopia properly so called in Africa, and in part the eastern coast of the Red sea in Arabia. The Midianites were of that nation. For Moses is said to have married a Cushite woman. The Ethiopians were confederated with the Egyptians, and conquered by Nebuchadnezzar.

13. The Assyrians were at this time a formidable nation, and Nineveh the greatest city in the world. This prophecy of its destruction is similar to that of Nahum which preceded it, and very much resembles that of the destruction of Babylon, which rose from its ruins.

Ch. III. 1. The prophet here addresses the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

3. With some alteration of the text it may be, *They finish not, or leave not off, till the morning.*

Like wild beasts they shunned the light.

7 He

7. He thought that the destruction of other nations, and their own preceding calamities, would have been a salutary and effectual warning to them, but they were not.

8. But tho' the nation would not be reformed by this visitation, and these examples, they would be brought to repentance when the time was come for the punishment of all their enemies in the latter days. They would then repent and be restored to the divine favour, and would never more depart from him.

10. From the most distant parts of the earth the Israelites would return to their own country.

11. Being then reformed, they would not be exposed to shame and punishment for their transgressions, as formerly. The nation will then be purged of the wicked and disobedient.

15. This evidently refers to the final happy state of the Israelites, and not to any intermediate event.

18. As there will be no more affliction, there will be no more any cause of reproach, or insult, to other nations.

20. *Before their eyes.* MSS. Syr:

This cannot possibly relate to any thing else than the final restoration of the Israelites, when they will be the most distinguished nation on earth.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

H A G G A I.

HAGGAI, Zechariah and Malachi, prophesied after the return of the Jews from Babylon. All the other prophets preceded that event. The prophecies of Haggai, of whom nothing is known but what may be collected from this book, are very exactly dated by the years of *Darius*, who must have been *Darius Hystaspis*.

Ch. I. 1. Zerubbabel was the son of Salathiel, who was the son, or grandson, of Jeconiah or Jehoiachim king of Judah, who was carried captive to Babylon. By the Chaldeans he was called Shezbazzar, as we learn from Ezra i, 8. Joshua is likewise called *Jeshua* in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. His father Josedech was carried captive to Babylon. 1. Chron. vi, 15.

2. Tho' an order had been given by Cyrus for the Jews to return, and rebuild their temple, yet partly through their negligence, and partly through the opposition of their neighbours, the foundation only had been laid. They had, however, erected the altar of burnt offering, and sacrificed upon it, according to the laws of Moses.

4. They are reprov'd because, tho' they had built good houses for themselves, they neglected the house of God, and for this they were punished in the manner that is here described.

15. This

5. This was probably before any encouragement had been given by Darius.

Ch. II. 3. We learn from Ezra, that while the young men, who had not seen the temple of Solomon, were rejoicing on the erection of this, the old men, who had seen it, wept to see this so much inferior to it.

6. This prophecy had no proper fulfilment at the return from Babylon, and therefore it must relate to a time that is yet future, viz. the final restoration of the Jews; when another temple will be built, more splendid than that of Solomon.

7. By *the desire of all nations* Dr. Heberden with great probability supposes to be meant the *riches* which will be contributed by all nations to the rebuilding of the temple.

9. This *shaking of all nations* is probably the same with that which is described by many other prophets, who foretell great revolutions by war to precede the restoration of the Jews who at their return will carry with them much wealth, here perhaps called *the desire of all nations*. This is the more probable from the mention of *gold and silver*, which immediately follows. Or this phrase *the desire of all nations* may denote more generally, that state of peace and prosperity, which is the great wish of all mankind, and which will be enjoyed by them all, in the latter days. Agreeably to this, Paul says, Rom. viii, 19, *The earnest expectation of the creature (the creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

If by giving *peace* be meant a *permanent peace*, the time here referred to did not come before the temple

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they were then building was destroyed, and therefore a temple not yet erected must have been intended. The common interpretation has been that *the desire of all nations* meant the *Messiah*, and that his presence in the temple they were then building would give it greater glory than the former could boast. But besides that the Messiah cannot properly be said to have been the desire of any other nation than the Jews; the glory derived from the presence of the Messiah could not be greater than that which came from the presence of the *Shekinah*, the bright cloud, which was the token of the divine presence, by which both the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the temple of Solomon, had been honoured.

14. The people being unclean, every thing that they did became so, even their sacrifices.

15. All antient nations considered temporal prosperity as proceeding from the good will of the deities they worshipped, and adversity as the effect of their anger; and it pleased the Divine Being to make use of this as an evidence of his favour or displeasure to the Israelites. Their affairs were always prosperous while they adhered to his pure worship, and they experienced the reverse of this whenever they deviated from it. But this is the most striking appeal to their experience of any thing that occurs in their history. Before they applied themselves to the building of the temple, nothing succeeded with them, and immediately afterwards, even from a particular day, they were assured that every thing would.

16. — When ye came. MSS:

23. As

23. As nothing that answers to this description took place in the time of Zerubbabel, this prophecy must relate to some future time, and therefore it could not be the Zerubbabel who was then living, that was intended, but a person descended from him, some person of the family of David; and understood in this sense it coincides with many other prophecies, which announce great revolutions and calamity, previous to the restoration of the Jews and the final establishment of their affairs under a prince of the house of David.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF
Z E C H A R I A H.

ZECHARIAH prophesied at the same time with Haggai, viz. in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, and together with him encouraged the Jews in the rebuilding of their temple. He was the son of Barachiah, and the grand son of Iddo, who was probably one of the priests who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel. Neh. xii, 4.

Ch. I: 5. Tho' their fathers, and the prophets who were sent to them, were dead, there remained sufficient evidence of the truth of their predictions.

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7. These

7. These emblematical visions, and the interpretations of them, resemble those of Daniel. They were calculated to make an impression on the mind of the prophet, and to enable him to remember the predictions with which they were accompanied.

8. It is not uncommon to paint horses, at least their tails, red, by way of ornament in the East. *Fragments* vol. iv, p. 190.

11. The Persian empire, which comprehended all the civilized part of the world, was at that time at peace, but the affairs of the Jews were unsettled.

12. It is remarkable that seventy years elapsed from the first captivity of the Jews under Jehoiachim to the decree of Cyrus giving them leave to return to their country and rebuild their temple, and also another seventy years from the destruction of the city and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, to the rebuilding of the temple under Darius, and the latter appears to me, to be the seventy years intended in the prophecy of Jeremiah.

15. All the neighbouring nations contributed to aggravate the calamities of the Jews, before and after the Babylonish captivity; and many nations have done the same during their present dispersion; and for this they will be severely punished.

17. This probably relates not so much to the time that immediately followed the Babylonish captivity, but a more distant period not yet come.

19. Power was indicated by horns.

21. This emblem of workmen is not easy to be understood.

derstood. They were persons who, by some operation or other, destroyed the effect of the horns.

Ch. II. 1. The prophecy in this chapter must relate to the future flourishing state of the Israelites, it corresponds so exactly with those of Isaiah, and others, which certainly have that object.

11. This did not take place after the return from Babylon, but according to other prophecies, it is to be the case when the Jews shall return from their present dispersion.

13. He does not confine himself to the heavens, where is his throne, and where he is invisible, but comes forth to shew himself in his works to all the world.

Ch. III. The vision contained in this chapter represents the opposition made to the prosperity of the Israelites, and the removal of it.

8. The whole nation was represented by the High-priest, their iniquity and idolatry by the filthy garments with which he was clothed, and their reformation by taking them off, and clothing him with goodly apparel.

It should probably have been *he said*.

3. On account of their wonderful deliverance from a state of captivity.

The *branch* here mentioned must denote the person so denominated by Isaiah, Ch. iv, 2, and Jeremiah xxiii, 5, and xxxiii, 14, to whose prophecies this is an allusion, or that descendant of the house of David, who is to be at the head of the nation on their return from their present dispersion.

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9. This

9. This was a visionary representation of a large stone, or rock, out of which flowed seven fountains, or streams, as from the rock of Rephidim in the time of Moses; to intimate that there would be plenty of water to wash away all the impurity of the nation.

10. That is, they would enjoy rest and peace, a character of future happy times, when the Israelites shall be finally settled in their own country.

Ch. IV. 6. There is no distinct explanation of this visionary representation, but it seems intended to signify that there would be sufficient provision for the worship of God in the nation; there being olive trees to supply the lamps with oil to burn continually, as in the temple.

7. *Because thou art.* CONJ. HO. One MSS.

The people were then employed in rebuilding the temple; and to encourage them, they were assured that, notwithstanding their weakness and poverty, the work would be accomplished, and all impediments removed; the mountain of opposition becoming a plain, and the last stone would be laid with joyful acclamations, acknowledging the good providence of God in it.

10. *These seven are the eyes of Jehovah.* A. V. N.

That is, examining whether the structure was properly raised, which implied that the building was then completed. The seven fountains here mentioned refer to the former vision, in which was represented a rock with seven fountains for the purification of the people. These are here said to be dispersed over all the earth, denoting the purification, or reformation, of all mankind,

kind, a state of universal virtue, as well as of universal peace.

12. These persons who stood by the olive trees were not mentioned in the account of the vision, but must have made a part of it.

13. Meaning perhaps some liquor as valuable as gold.

14. An *anointed person*, signifies a person appointed to some office of dignity or power, but what that office was is not expressed. In Rev. xi, 4, the two witnesses to the truth in the time of the great apostacy, are said to be *the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth*. If these be the same, they represent all those who maintain the truth against idolatry, and the corruption of religion, in every age.

Ch. V. The visions in this chapter denote denunciations of judgment against the wickedness of the people, and are of a different character from those in the preceding chapter.

3. The innocent and the guilty were treated alike, and therefore it was time for the Divine Being to interpose, and make a distinction between them.

6. *This is their iniquity in all the earth.* MSS. LXX. &c.

11. The shutting up of the woman (by which was represented the wickedness of the nation) in a vessel out of which she could not escape, being confined in it by a weight which she could not remove, may denote the expulsion of the Jews from their country, as a punishment for their sins, till the time appointed by God

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for

for their restoration. As Shinar was the country in which Babylon was built, the carrying the woman thither will more naturally represent a punishment similar to that of their former captivity, which was to Babylon.

Ch. VI. 3. The word translated *grizzled*, should rather be *speckled red*, all the horses of this chariot being of the same colour.

7 It is probable that in this verse the *bay* is put, by the mistake of the transcriber, for the *red*. Otherwise there is no mention of the horses of this colour going out at all.

The going forth of these chariots may denote the judgments of God in the oppression of the Jews. The black horses may signify the punishment of the Babylonians, who are always described as coming from the North by the Persians. *These quieted the spirit of God*, for satisfied his wrath with respect to them v. 8. The white horses may denote Alexander and his successors, and the speckled red the Armenian princes, who subdued the Edomites, and other enemies of the Jews in the South.

8 There is much obscurity in this vision. The chariots being *four*, probably represent the four great empires which were the subject of Daniel's prophecies, especially as the horses in the last of them are said to be strong, which is the character of the Roman empire. Nothing is said of the first chariot, because the Babylonian empire which it represented was then extinct. The horses in the second chariot went Northwards, and the conquests of the Persians, who lived in the South, were of course in that direction. The third, which

which represents the Grecians, followed them; and the fourth which represents the Romans, who were situated to the North, made their conquests to the South. These chariots issuing from between *two mountains of brass*, may signify that their conquests were made according to the decrees of God, which are said to be as immoveable as mountains of brass. As to the colours of the horses in the different chariots, I do not see any particular reason for them, tho' no doubt there was one.

12. The person here called *the branch*, is no doubt the same with him who is so denominated in a former passage; not Zerubbabel who was then living, but one of his descendants, who would be called to act a very important part at the restoration of the Jews.

15. The circumstance of people from a great distance joining in the building of the temple, which was to be erected by the person called the branch, is alone a proof that the event referred to was a distant one, the same that was foretold by Isaiah and other prophets; who said that people of all nations would join in this work, and bring their riches into it. The crown was an emblem of the power with which the future prince would be invested. If it had been meant for Zerubbabel who was then living, it would, no doubt, have been put on his head, and not on that of the High priest.

Ch. VII. 1. The temple being now rebuilt, and the affairs of the Jews in some measure restored, the people of Bethel and others sent a deputation to the rulers, to know whether it was now necessary to keep the fasts
which

which had been instituted in commemoration of the calamitous events which had befallen their country. In the fifth month the temple, together with the principal houses in Jerusalem, had been burned, and in the seventh month Gedaliah, who had been appointed governor of the country by Nebuchadnezzar, had been assassinated; in consequence of which the rest of the Jews had fled to Egypt, where new troubles awaited them:

3—*Seventy years.* MSS.

7. The answer from God is that since those days of fasting were of their own institution, and not of his appointment, they might eat and drink on those days as well as on any other.

14. The only commands on which God had laid peculiar stress, were those of a moral nature, which if they attended to, all things would go well with them. But these had been neglected by their fathers, and on this account, and not for their non observance of any precepts of another nature, had the late judgments overtaken them.

Ch. VIII. 1. This chapter contains a general prophecy of the future happy times which awaited the Israelitish nation.

6. Tho' to men this great event seems difficult to be accomplished, it is not so to God, to whose power nothing is difficult. The people who heard this would naturally conclude that those happy times would come soon; and they certainly did not expect any more dispersions, or great calamity of any kind, tho' greater than any that they had hitherto experienced were reserved

served for them. But the prophecy was not the less true. In like manner, we at this day may, from one prejudice or another, mistake the meaning of the prophecies, and yet, after the event, it may be sufficiently evident that they were true, and came from God, and that persons divested of prejudice might have understood them at the time when they were delivered. However, even the mistakes of men in these and other respects answer the purposes of divine providence, as well as their right judgments.

10. As a proof that the hand of God conducted their affairs, and therefore that they might depend upon his promises, the prophet reminds them of the unprosperous state of their affairs while they neglected the commands of God, and the promising appearance they then began to wear, and he assures them that the greatest prosperity would be the consequence of their obedience, especially of the moral precepts of the law. It therefore depended upon themselves whether they should experience any more calamity. But they failing on their part, the Divine Being was justified in executing all that he had threatened in case of disobedience

19. The siege of Jerusalem was begun in the tenth month, and in the fourth of the year following the city was taken. Jer. Lii, 4. 6. Here they are promised that all their days of sorrow would be turned into occasions of rejoicing in their future prosperous state. And the time will, no doubt, come when we shall see the propriety and use of all the evils we now experience,
and

and see reason to bless God for them, as well as for the circumstances that give us present pleasure.

23. It is evident that this respectable state of the Jewish nation has not yet taken place, and therefore that this prophecy must relate to what is yet future, when the Jews will be restored to the possession of their own country.

Ch. IX. It has been supposed that the following chapters in this book were written by Jeremiah ; and that it has been by some mistake that they have been ascribed to Zechariah. But considering how near to the time of Zechariah the canon of the Old Testament was settled by the Jews, this opinion is very improbable as it could not but have been known at that time what was written by him, and what was of a prior date. In our common copies of the New Testament, a passage in these chapters is ascribed to Jeremiah. But this may be accounted for without having recourse to so great an improbability as that the authors of the canon were under so great a mistake.

1. This chapter contains a prophecy concerning the fate of Syria, and other countries in the neighbourhood of Judea, contrasted with that of the Jews. Hadrach is not mentioned before, but it was, no doubt, the name of some place in Syria, as well as Hamath, and Damascus.

2. Tyre soon recovered from the effects of the siege by Nebuchadnezzar. For the inhabitants immediately removed to an island opposite to their old town, and when Alexander arrived in Asia, their affairs were as flourishing as ever they had been. After the conquest
of

of the East by Alexander, Damascus, as well as Persia, became part of his empire, and was subject to the Seleucids; and it suffered greatly by subsequent revolutions, without even rising to the distinction which it had enjoyed before. It is now subject to the Turks. Hamath was a considerable city on the northern frontier of the land of Canaan.

3. Many Sidonians being driven from their former situation, built Tyre, whence it is called by Isaiah (xxiii, 2) *the daughter of Sidon*.

4. This prophecy was fulfilled by Alexander; and from the taking of the city by him, it never recovered, but gradually declined, till it is become what was prophesied of it long before, viz. a place for a few fishermen to dry their nets on.

On the approach of Ochus king of Persia, the Sidonians, who had revolted, destroyed all their shipping; and not being able to stand a siege, they burned the city together with themselves, an event which must have struck with consternation the Philistines who had depended upon them. After the taking of Tyre by Alexander, all the inhabitants of the sea coast, towards which he next bent his march, were justly alarmed. Gaza was taken by him after a siege of two months, ten thousand of the inhabitants were slain, and their king dragged round the city till he was dead, and from this time the place was deserted. For the present Gaza, otherwise called *Majuma*, is built in a different situation. Old Gaza was a mile from the sea.

6. Besides what these places suffered by the conquest of Alexander, they suffered in the war with the Maccabees.

cabees. Jonathan set fire to Azotus, and burned and destroyed eight thousand men there. Askelon, and the other cities of the Philistines, never recovered their independence after the conquest of Alexander, and in a course of time became extinct.

7. The allusion is to a wild beast, whose prey is taken by force from his mouth. Many of the Philistines became proselytes to the Jewish religion after Alexander Jannæus had taken their principal city, and annexed the country to his dominions. From this time they were capable of any place of trust or honour, like native Jews. *This also had been the case of the Jebusites, and other inhabitants of Canaan, when they conformed to the religion of the Hebrews.* Thus Uriah was a Hittite, and the Cherethites were of the race of the Philistines.

8. This might allude to the favour shewn to the Jews by Alexander when he conquered Syria; but then it is said *an oppressor should no more pass through them*, whereas they were more cruelly oppressed by the Romans than by any preceding power. The prophecy must, therefore, refer to their final restoration.

9. This may be rendered, *Behold thy king cometh unto thee, the just one, and the Saviour.* This is a title by which Jesus is distinguished in the New Testament, and is probably copied from this passage in the Old.

This seems to be a pretty clear prediction of the humble appearance of the Messiah, here called the *king of the Jews*, at his first manifestation. Whether the literal fulfillment by Jesus actually riding on an ass was originally intended, is uncertain:

10. The prediction in this verse must relate to a time that is yet future, when both the ten tribes, and the Jews, will be peaceably settled in Palestine, and in some sense give law to all the world.

11. When the covenant between God and the Israelites was recent, and they were in Egypt, he delivered them as from *a pit in which was no water*, alluding perhaps to the deliverance of Joseph from such a pit.

12. As they were delivered before, so they would be again after their great dispersion, which may be called another captivity, in all the nations of the world, and as they returned with precious gifts from Egypt, they will return in a similar manner with much wealth from the countries in which they are dispersed at present.

13. God will make use of them for the destruction of their enemies, who are here said to be a people of Javan, whose posterity were settled in the North and the West, especially the countries now occupied by the Turks.

17. All the latter part of this chapter is a figurative description of the triumph of the Israelites over their last enemies, and their great prosperity after their restoration, when they will have plenty of corn and wine.

Ch. X. 1—*Give you.* MSS. Syr.

This verse should have closed the preceding chapter, as it relates to the fertility of the earth, in consequence of the divine blessing upon it.

2. The reason for the calamities of the Jewish nation is here assigned. They were addicted to the worship
of

of idols, and it pleased the Divine Being to shew them that all their expectations from such deities were vain. They could not avert from them the judgments with which they were threatened for their apostacy from his sole worship.

3. By *he goats* are meant leaders, or civil governors of the people, as by *shepherds* are meant the priests. Both were equally guilty.

4. Notwithstanding their apostacy, the Divine Being would not forsake his people ; but, after a sufficient time of discipline, would restore them to his favour ; and on this the prophet enlarges to the end of this chapter.

5. A nation being compared to a building, the *corner stone* will represent the prince, and the great *nails*, or *bolts*, which tie the principal parts together, will be the subordinate officers.

6. It is evident from this that the subject of the prophecy is the restoration of all the twelve tribes and not that of Judah only.

8. God will call them from the most distant countries, as a shepherd calls his sheep by a whistle, or other shrill sound. Tho' they will have been as it were, buried and forgotten in these distant countries, they shall only be as seed sown in the ground, which will in due time be found to have increased, instead of being lost or diminished.

11. They shall come from the most distant countries, some from beyond the seas, as they came from Egypt from beyond the Red Sea ; and the divine power will be equally conspicuous in their deliverance.

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Ch. XI. 1. The contents of this chapter seem to relate to the time that intervened between the erection of the second temple and the destruction of it by the Romans, especially the latter part of that period, when the people were become very degenerate, and ripe for destruction. Considering at what time this prophecy was delivered, it cannot be supposed to relate to any thing else. The complaint is exactly of such shepherds, or teachers, as were the Scribes and Pharisees in the time of our Saviour.

5. By the express order of God, Zechariah, who was a priest, undertakes the instruction of the people, who are called the *flock of slaughter*, because they were devoted to destruction, and for whom their appointed guides had no concern.

6. This prophecy was awfully fulfilled in the Jewish war, when great numbers perished in their quarrels with one another. Falling into the hands of the king, may signify their conquest by the Romans, against whom they had rebelled. For they had acknowledged that they had no king besides Cæsar.

7. He undertook the office of a public teacher along with those whose business it had been before; and as an emblem of his new office of a shepherd, he made himself two crooks, to which he gave the significant names of *delight*, and *bands*.

8. By one means or other, perhaps by his superior authority as a prophet, he supplanted them. But still he was disgusted with the people, and on the other hand, perhaps for the freedom of his reproofs, they were no less offended with him.

9. In obedience, therefore, no doubt, to his instructions, he took that crook to which he had given the name of *delight*, and broke it in the presence of the people; to signify that God no longer took any delight in them, but for a time set aside the covenant he had made with them, and would not take any concern in their affairs.

12. His office then ceasing, he asked for the wages that were due to him for his former instructions, and they gave him thirty pieces of silver. From this we seem authorized to infer, that some of the antient prophets were allowed a salary for their instructions, and probably those who are called false prophets undertook the business of public teachers, like the Scribes in our Saviour's time, for the sake of the advantage they derived from it; and that to draw to themselves more respect, they sometimes pretended to revelations which they had not, especially announcing events that would please and flatter the people.

13—*And cast it into the treasury.* MSS. Syr.

These thirty pieces of silver appeared a poor reward for his services; and by the direction of God (but for what reason does not appear) he gave the money to the potter who was employed in making vessels for the service of the temple, and who seems to have resided, and to have worked, in the precincts of it.

After this he publicly broke his second crook, to which he had given the name of *Bands*, to signify the dissolution of the connection between the ten tribes and that of Judah, or rather the continuance of the separation which had taken place before, till a very distant period.

As

As Judas Iscariot received thirty pieces of silver for betraying Jesus, it is said by the evangelist to be a fulfilling of this prophecy. But besides that this is an historical transaction, and no prophecy, there is no resemblance between the two cases besides that of the sums of money; and tho' they were the same, they were given for very different purposes. The one being given to a potter, and the other for the purchase of the potters field, have very little resemblance.

15. Zechariah having discharged the duty of a good shepherd, without any good effect, was directed to act the part, and put on the habit, or appearance, of a foolish one, as an emblem of such instructors as the people would hereafter have, and be pleased with, but against whom divine judgments were denounced: These were repeated by Jesus, and they overtook them at the destruction of Jerusalem.

16. The sense will be more clear if it be rendered as follows, *For behold I will raise up a shepherd in the land who shall not take account of that which is destroyed, nor seek after that which is scattered, nor heal that which is bruised, nor preserve that which is found.*

Ch. XII. 1. The prophecy which begins with this chapter, and continues to the end of the book, must relate to the events that will accompany the final restoration of the Jews, and especially the destruction of their enemies, who will invade them at that time.

2. The Jews themselves will be alarmed, and suffer greatly, tho' they will be finally victorious.

3. The allusion is to a great stone, which recoils upon and crushes the person who attempts to move it out of its place.

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5. We

5—*We will find inhabitants for Jerusalem.* MSS. LXX.

7. God will first appear in behalf of those who live in the open country, that those in the city may not boast of any preference in their favour.

8. The LXX has, *And the house of David shall be as the house of God.*

The most insignificant of them would become eminent as David had formerly been.

10. *And they shall look on him whom they pierced.* MS. N.

This clearly implies a conviction of Jesus, whom their ancestors had crucified, being the Messiah, and the most pungent regret for the treatment he had met with from them.

11. The mourning of Hadadrimmon, was probably that for Joliah, who was slain at Megiddo.

13. David, Nathan, Simeon, and Levi, are all enumerated among the progenitors of Jesus, Luke, iii, 29, 30, 31, but why they in particular should mourn on this occasion, does not appear. Considering the incredulity of the Jews at present, it does not seem probable that any thing will produce this conviction of Jesus being the Messiah, and this mourning in consequence of it, short of his personal appearance in the clouds.

Ch. XIII. 1. This is a clear prediction, in agreement with many others, of the reformation and purification of the Israelites after their restoration, when they will be effectually reclaimed from idolatry, and be indeed *a holy nation, and a peculiar people.*

3 That

3. That is, should make false pretences to prophecy by means of some heathenish rites.

4. The antient prophets were habited in a particular manner, using plain and coarse garments.

5. A man charged with following the profession of a prophet will shew his hands, as a proof that he had been accustomed to a laborious occupation, inconsistent with that of a public teacher. And when he should be questioned about some scars that were observed on his hands, he would deny that they were made for any idolatrous purpose, but arose from wounds which he had given himself on account of mourning for some relation or friend; it being usual for persons to cut themselves, as well as tear their hair and rend their garments, on such occasions. Persons also cut themselves to shew their affection for particular persons without mourning for them.

7—*I will smite the shepherd.* MSS. Agreeable to Matt. xxvi, 31.

Here the prophet reverts to the calamitous part of the scene above mentioned, when many of the Israelites, and even of the leaders of the nation, those next to God himself, would be cut off; so that not more than a third part of them would escape. These, however, would be purified, as if they had passed through the fire, and would become eminently holy and prosperous.

Ch. XV. 2. This invasion of Palestine cannot be the same with that of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel. For the last is to take place after the people are completely settled, and have been a long time in a peaceful state; and the invaders are to be defeated in a miraculous

manner, without the people suffering any thing. Whereas on this occasion their sufferings will be very great.

4. This account of the cleaving of the mount of Olives, and of one river rising and taking its course towards the Dead sea, and another to the Mediterranean, mentioned v 18, seems to be too particular to admit of a figurative interpretation. It also agrees in part with Ezekiel's account of a new river issuing from the temple: Ch. xlvii, 2.

5—*And the valley of the mountain shall be shut up.*
MSS. LXX.

—*All the saints with him.* MSS.

This earthquake is alluded to in Amos i, 1, as well as in this place, tho' it is not mentioned in the historical books of the Old Testament. Josephus, who may have had sources of information which are now lost, says (*Ant. L. ix, c. 10*) that it happened when Uzziah invaded the priest's office, and was struck with leprosy. He says, "Before the city at the place called *Erroga*" or the cleft, "one half of the mountain on the western side was broken off, and having rolled four furlongs towards the eastern mountain, stopped, so that the roads, and the king's gardens, were choaked up."

7. A thick haze darkening the air, very often precedes earthquakes; and such may literally be the case in this earthquake, and the obscurity disappear in the evening.

8. The opening of the earth by an earthquake may be followed by an eruption of water; and a channel being thereby made from a reservoir within the mountain

tain, it may continue to run in the manner that is here described.

9. As the Divine Being bears an equal relation to all mankind, he may from this time, and perhaps by means of these manifestations of his power and providence, be known, and acknowledged, by all the world, and idolatry, be every where abolished.

10. At the time that Zechariah prophesied, the city did not occupy all the space that it formerly had done, but he foretells that it would be enlarged to its greatest former dimensions.

11. In travelling along the plains, from Geba in the North to Rimmon in the South, it is necessary to fetch a large compass, so as almost to go round the whole land of Judea. The permanent security that is here promised, shews that the prophecy relates to a time that is yet future. By there being then *no accursed thing*, must be meant that there will be no more cause of national calamity, such as arose from the behaviour of Achan.

12. This is an account of some kind of plague with which the invaders of Palestine will be seized. A similar plague will also seize the cattle that are used in the camp, as we read v. 15, which ought to have followed this.

13. There will also be dissention in the invading army, so that they will destroy one another.

19. Many prophecies inform us that all nations will hereafter be brought to the knowledge and worship of the one true God, and that the Hebrew nation will, in some sense or other, be at the head of all the rest. And

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perhaps the most natural method of making this acknowledgment, with respect both to God and his favoured nation, will be to join in their worship at their greatest festival viz. that of Tabernacles, at which the law was recited every seventh year, and which was of a more general nature than either of the two other feasts, viz. the Passover; or Pentecost. If it should be literally true that nations neglecting to pay this homage shall be punished in this manner, it will be such an evidence of a particular providence, and especially having been preceded by the prediction, as mankind has not *hitherto had any experience of.* But if true religion (which is necessary to the virtue and happiness of men) is to be maintained, there must be some effectual means employed for the purpose. Egypt being now without rain would not suffer by the want of it. Its inhabitants must, therefore, suffer a famine from some other cause, if their conduct require that punishment.

21. So pure will be the whole city of Jerusalem, that every thing in it may be deemed holy, and the ordinary utensils in houses fit to be used for the purpose of sacrifice in the temple. The bells that are used in the trappings of horses, as well as the horses themselves, will be holy, nor will there be at that time any pollution from buying and selling within the precincts of it, all such practices will be far removed from it.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

M A L A C H I.

MALACHI was probably contemporary with Nehemiah, since there are plain allusions in this book to the same things that he complains of. This, was the last of the prophets who preceded John the Baptist, and the interval between them was near four hundred years. This would naturally draw more attention upon him and consequently upon Jesus, than would otherwise have been given to them. It is not a little remarkable that in all this space of time there does not appear to have been any pretension to the gift of prophecy among the Jews, which is a proof that, contrary to what is often asserted concerning them, they were far from being credulous in this respect. If they had been so, there would, no doubt, have been impostors enow to take advantage of that disposition. There were no false prophets in the time of our Saviour, as there were in the time of Jeremiah and others.

Ch. i. 3. That is, I have preferred Jacob to Esau, tho' he was the elder brother. The Edomites were at this time an independent nation, and probably not inferior in power to the Jews ; but they were conquered by Hyrcanus, and incorporated with the Jews, on professing the same religion. The word rendered *dragon* generally signifies the crocodile. But there could not be any in the mountainous country of Idumea.

mea. As this animal chiefly frequents places deserted by men, the expression seems to be proverbial denoting desolation in general.

8. This is an earnest expostulation for abuses which were afterwards effectually corrected. For we find nothing of this kind in the time of our Saviour, or long before. The Jews were, on the contrary, too superstitious in all ritual observances.

10. That is, I shall have no occasion for your services; for I shall be worshipped by all the nations of the earth.

13. It is evident from these complaints, that the generality of the Jews who returned from Babylon had but little zeal for their religion, and therefore that nothing but a full conviction of its truth, and the solemn warning of their prophets, could have produced a change of their dispositions in this respect. If they could have found any plausible pretext for abandoning it at that time, they certainly would have done it.

Ch. II. 3. *Behold I will take from you the shoulder.*
LXX. &c. N.—*Fcasts, and I will take you away.*
LXX.

The shoulder of certain sacrifices belonged to the priest, as also the maw. But such priests as these were not deserving of any thing more than the dung. Nay, they deserved to be rejected, and thrown away like the dung itself.

6. We have no account of the character of Levi that was to his advantage. The part that he acted in conjunction with Simeon was far from being so. But, no doubt, his character as well as that of all his brethren would

would be improved by experience and reflection, especially after their residence in Egypt along with Joseph. But by *Levi* may not be meant that patriarch, but the tribe of Levi in general.

11. This was the state of things in the time of Nehemiah.

12. That is, every branch of the family.

13. There were many complaints, accompanied with the tears of the injured, of the conduct of the priests.

14. Many had probably divorced their former wives in order to marry foreigners.

15. A man and his wife being considered in the law of Moses as *one flesh*, were supposed to have, as it were, but one and the same spirit, or soul.

16. He concealed in his garment what he had taken by force:

17. This was direct profaneness, with which some were, no doubt, chargeable.

Ch. III. 1. Here is some person announced, who should precede the day of visitation, when God would again appear in an extraordinary manner in favour of his people, and one who, like a pioneer, would *prepare the way* for him. Another person is also announced called *the Lord whom ye seek*, and *the messenger of the covenant*, who would come in a sudden or unexpected manner into the temple they had then built; one who by turning many to righteousness, would be the means of establishing a new covenant, or settlement, between God and his people, that new covenant which was mentioned by Ezekiel, when the stony heart would be taken from them, and they would acquire a heart of flesh, &c. Ch. xi, 29, xxxvi, 26. The

The two persons here announced cannot be any other than John the Baptist for the former, and Jesus, the Messiah, for the latter. They both preached repentance, and exhorted to the practice of virtue, and by this means they did, in fact, turn many unto righteousness.

2. His coming was the occasion of a great separation among the people; the believing Jews being saved from the destruction which overtook the unbelievers among them, when the Romans almost exterminated the inhabitants.

3. The purification of the sons of Levi may signify the institution of a new order of preachers, whose instruction will be more efficacious than those of the Jewish priests and Levites.

5—*Those that swear falsely by my name.* MSS. LXX. &c.

6. That is, if it had not been for my promise and oath to your fathers, which I shall not change, your sins have been such as would have induced me to cast you off for ever.

3. This was the state of things in the time of Nehemiah.

10. This is the very test that was proposed by Haggai, ii, 18, and Zechariah viii, 12.

14. This impiety is similar to that which is animadverted upon Ch. ii, 17.

16. This is a promise of especial favour to those who did not give into the impiety of the times in which they lived, and perhaps an intimation that, at the time of the restoration of the Jews, many of them will be
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unbelievers, and be cut off, before the prosperous and final settlement of the rest. That many will be so cut off is evident from Zech. xiv, 2.

Ch. IV. 1. This prophecy announces the final calamity of the Jews on account of their degeneracy and wickedness, with the promise of favour to the righteous among them, and cannot refer to any thing besides their sufferings from the Romans, and their dispersion into all nations which succeeded the war with them. It is remarkable, however, that none of the Jews appear to have had any apprehension of this great calamity, but were in daily expectation of a triumphant Messiah from before the time of Christ till after the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. It is usual to represent the wind as having wings; and the heat of the sun occasions a wind, which is peculiarly pleasant and salutary in hot countries.

3. In the East, ashes are often mixed with mortar, and this is made by treading.

These who were spared have been thought to be the christians. But the prophecy in this verse does not apply to them, since they took no part in the war, and were far from contributing to the distress of their countrymen. Perhaps, however, what God did in some measure on their account, as a punishment for the murder of Jesus and the persecution of his followers, is ascribed to *them*. If this scheme of interpretation be admitted, the calamity that will be brought on the nations among whom the Jews are dispersed, may not arise from any active exertions of theirs, but from other causes

ses ; Divine Providence directing the events on their account, and in order to bring about their restoration.

4. This admonition to respect the laws of Moses, and the promise of the prophet Elijah before the awful event announced before, seems to be an intimation that till the arrival of this Elijah, no more prophets would be sent to them.

5. This Elijah Jesus said was John the Baptist, whose character and office did in several respects resemble his.

6. His preaching was to convert and reform persons of all ages, the old and the young ; and by that means in some measure lessen the calamity that was impending over the nation. And this end was in a considerable degree effected by the promulgation of the gospel.

Our Saviour describing the state of temporary dissension and disorder that would be occasioned by his religion says, Matt. xvi. 21. *The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child, and children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death.* Here the prophet, describing an opposite state of things that would be introduced by Elias, uses phrases of a contrary import.

Some think that tho' John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and in several respects resembled him, he was not the Elijah intended in this prophecy, but that before the restoration of the Jews Elijah himself, who never died, will appear, and act some important part with respect to his nation. The Jews think that he will point out to them the Messiah,
and

